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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

League of Women Voters of Arizona,  
  
Plaintiff,  
  
vs.  
  
Lions of Liberty LLC; Yavapai County  
Preparedness Team; Jim Arroyo, Lucas  
Cilano; Nicholas Cilano; Brian Mounsey;  
Toby Fox; Bruce Mounsey; James Johnson;  
Melody Jennings; Clean Elections USA;  
John Does 1-10,  
  
Defendants.

No. CV-22-08196-PCT-MTL

**DECLARATION OF  
RACHEL F. HOMER**

I, Rachel F. Homer, declare as follows:

- 1 1. I am over the age of 18 and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this  
2 Declaration.
- 3 2. I am an attorney with the Protect Democracy Project, and am counsel for  
4 Plaintiff League of Women Voters of Arizona. I submit this declaration to  
5 provide the Court true and correct copies of certain documents submitted in  
6 support of Plaintiff's Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary  
7 Injunction.
- 8 3. **Exhibit A** is a true and correct copy of a Reuters article titled "Fact Check-Does  
9 '2000 Mules' provide evidence of voter fraud in the 2020 U.S. presidential  
10 election?," dated May 27, 2022. The article is available at  
11 [https://www.reuters.com/article/factcheck-usa-mules/fact-check-does-2000-  
14 mules-provide-evidence-of-voter-fraud-in-the-2020-u-s-presidential-election-  
15 idUSL2N2XJ0OQ](https://www.reuters.com/article/factcheck-usa-mules/fact-check-does-2000-<br/>12 mules-provide-evidence-of-voter-fraud-in-the-2020-u-s-presidential-election-<br/>13 idUSL2N2XJ0OQ).
- 16 4. **Exhibit B** is a true and correct copy of a Business Insider article titled "Former  
17 AG Bill Barr laughs at Dinesh D'Souza's election conspiracy theory film '2000  
18 Mules' in January 6 Committee deposition," dated June 13, 2022. The article is  
19 available at [https://www.businessinsider.com/bill-barr-mocks-2000-mules-film-  
21 january-6-deposition-video-2022-6](https://www.businessinsider.com/bill-barr-mocks-2000-mules-film-<br/>20 january-6-deposition-video-2022-6).
- 22 5. **Exhibit C** is a true and correct copy of a Politico.com article titled "Arizona  
23 AG's office asks feds to investigate conservative nonprofit True the Vote,"  
24 dated October 14, 2022. The article is available at  
25 <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/10/14/arizona-ag-true-the-vote-00061973>.
- 26 6. **Exhibit D** is a true and correct copy of a letter from Reginald "Reggie" Grigsby,  
27 Chief Special Agent, Special Investigations Section, Office of Attorney General  
28 Mark Brnovich, dated October 14, 2022. The letter is available at  
<https://www.azag.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/202210141445.pdf>.
7. **Exhibit E** is a true and correct copy of a ProPublica article titled "'Big Lie'  
Vigilantism Is on the Rise. Big Tech is Failing to Respond.," dated June 17,

2022. The article is available at <https://www.propublica.org/article/election-fraud-ballot-mules-facebook-tiktok-memes>.

8. **Exhibit F** is a true and correct copy of a New York Times article titled “Hunting for Voter Fraud, Conspiracy Theorists Organize ‘Stakeouts’,” dated August 10, 2022. The article is available at

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/technology/voter-drop-box-conspiracy-theory.html>.

9. **Exhibit G** is a true and correct copy of The Lions of Liberty webpage titled “Operation: Drop Box.” The webpage is archived and available at

<https://web.archive.org/web/20221012190606/https://thelionsofliberty.com/operation-drop-box/>.

10. **Exhibit H** is a true and correct copy of a Verde Valley Independent article titled “Ballot ‘drop watch’ won’t intimidate voters, says ‘Lion’,” dated October 5, 2022. The article is available at

<https://www.verdenews.com/news/2022/oct/05/ballot-drop-watch-wont-intimidate-voters-says-lion/>.

11. **Exhibit I** is a true and correct copy of a Vice News article titled “Armed Fringe Groups Are Gearing Up to ‘Protect’ Midterm Ballot Dropboxes,” dated October 6, 2022. The article is available at <https://www.vice.com/en/article/dy7wvj/lions-of-liberty-oath-keepers-midterm-ballot-boxes>.

12. **Exhibit J** is a true and correct copy of a MilitiaWatch article titled “Why, CPT?: Arizona Oath Keepers as a microcosm for the movement,” dated June 28, 2021. The article is available at <https://militia.watch/read/ycpt-az-ok/>.

13. **Exhibit K** is a true and correct copy of a Media Matters for America article titled “Steve Bannon hosts QAnon-linked activist to promote organization seemingly focused on intimidating voters,” dated October 17, 2022. The article is available at <https://www.mediamatters.org/steve-bannon/steve-bannon-hosts-qanon-linked-activist-promote-organization-seemingly-focused>.

1 14. **Exhibit L** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
2 Social, dated September 8, 2022.

3 15. **Exhibit M** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
4 Social, dated October 17, 2022.

5 16. **Exhibit N** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
6 Social, dated October 16, 2022.

7 17. **Exhibit O** is a true and correct copy of a post by former President Donald J.  
8 Trump under username @realDonaldTrump on Truth Social, on or around  
9 October 16, 2022.

10 18. **Exhibit P** is a true and correct copy of a post by reporter Nicole Grigg under  
11 username @NicoleSGrigg on Twitter, dated October 19, 2022. The video  
12 included in the post is available at  
13 <https://twitter.com/NicoleSGrigg/status/1582887636884066304>.

14 19. **Exhibit Q** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
15 Social, dated October 19, 2022.

16 20. **Exhibit R** is a true and correct copy of a post by reporter Nicole Grigg under  
17 username @NicoleSGrigg on Twitter, dated October 23, 2022.

18 21. **Exhibit S** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
19 Social, on or around October 21, 2022.

20 22. **Exhibit T** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
21 Social, dated October 17, 2022.

22 23. **Exhibit U** is a true and correct copy of a post by reporter Nicole Grigg under  
23 username @NicoleSGrigg on Twitter, dated October 19, 2022. The video  
24 included in the post is available at  
25 <https://twitter.com/nicolesgrigg/status/1582904476393820160>.

26 24. **Exhibit V** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @TrumperMel on Truth  
27 Social, dated October 22, 2022.

- 1       25. **Exhibit W** is a true and correct copy of an Arizona Mirror article titled  
2       “Republicans are urging vigilantes to watch ballot drop boxes, polling locations,  
3       to sniff out fraud,” dated August 2, 2022. The article is available at  
4       [https://www.azmirror.com/2022/08/02/republicans-are-urging-vigilantes-to-](https://www.azmirror.com/2022/08/02/republicans-are-urging-vigilantes-to-watch-ballot-drop-boxes-polling-locations-to-sniff-out-fraud/)  
5       [watch-ballot-drop-boxes-polling-locations-to-sniff-out-fraud/](https://www.azmirror.com/2022/08/02/republicans-are-urging-vigilantes-to-watch-ballot-drop-boxes-polling-locations-to-sniff-out-fraud/).  
6       26. **Exhibit X** is a true and correct copy of a post by State Senator Kelly Townsend  
7       under username @AZKellyT on Twitter, dated October 24, 2022.  
8       27. **Exhibit Y** is a true and correct copy of a post by reporter Jack Healy under  
9       username @jackhealyNYT on Twitter, dated October 27, 2022.  
10      28. **Exhibit Z** is a true and correct copy of a post by user @JeannieGiering on  
11      Twitter, dated July 31, 2022.

12  
13      I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing Declaration is true and correct.  
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15

16           Executed on October 28, 2022.                      /s/ Rachel F. Homer

17    Rachel F. Homer  
18  
19  
20

21      DATED this 28<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2022.  
22

23    OSBORN MALEDON, P.A.

24    By s/ Joshua D. Bendor

25    Joshua D. Bendor  
26    Brandon T. Delgado  
27    2929 North Central Avenue, Suite 2100  
28    Phoenix, Arizona 85012-2793

  Orion Danjuma (*pro hac vice to be filed*)  
  PROTECT DEMOCRACY PROJECT  
  82 Nassau St. #601

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Attorneys for Plaintiff

# **Exhibit A**



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REUTERS FACT CHECK MAY 27, 2022 / 8:29 AM / UPDATED 5 MONTHS AGO

# Fact Check-Does '2000 Mules' provide evidence of voter fraud in the 2020 U.S. presidential election?

By Reuters Fact Check

16 MIN READ



A documentary directed by conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza claims it can prove widespread fraud was carried out during the 2020 presidential election in the United States. Reuters Fact Check examined the main claims presented in the film and did not find any concrete evidence definitively showing proof of fraud.

The 90-minute film "2000 Mules" sees D'Souza team up with True the Vote, a Texas-based nonprofit that describes itself as protecting election integrity ([www.truethetvote.org/about/](http://www.truethetvote.org/about/)), to investigate alleged voter fraud in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

All five of the listed states were swing states in 2020 that ultimately backed Joe Biden for president - and were later central to baseless speculations of fraud.

Reuters has covered this topic extensively ([here](#)) and ([here](#)), as well as in fact checks ([here](#)), ([here](#)) and ([here](#)).

D'Souza's documentary says Biden victories in swing states could be thanks to 2,000 people - or "mules" - who were hired by unnamed nonprofits - dubbed "stash



houses” - to conduct “ballot trafficking” i.e.: stuffing numerous drop boxes with potentially fake absentee ballots.

It also alleges that the so-called “mules” were paid \$10 for every fake ballot they submitted.

D’Souza did not respond to multiple requests for comment from Reuters.

## **THE METHODOLOGY**

D’Souza and True the Vote analyzed surveillance footage of drop boxes mostly from Georgia, as well as “some” from Arizona, along with “geotracking” data purchased from unnamed brokers.

The “geotracking” data was gleaned from cellphone apps pinpointing device location and movements between Oct. 1, 2020, and election day, Nov. 3, for Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, according to the documentary. Data for Georgia stretched until January, when there was a runoff vote.

The documentary alleges that by tracking phone locations to the addresses of five alleged “stash house” nonprofits and 10 or more drop boxes, the “mules” were identified.

There were 242 people in Atlanta, Georgia, who fitted the bill; 200+ in Arizona; 100 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; 500+ in Michigan, and 1,000+ mules in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – totaling over 2,000 “mules”.

Viewers were then shown multiple surveillance footage clips of different people at drop boxes, which the documentary said it had identified as some of the ballot traffickers carrying out their crimes.

Multiple concerns were raised by experts speaking to Reuters about the “geotracking” portion of the documentary. It was unclear whether the same test was applied anywhere other than the swing states in question (to prove a unique phenomenon had happened), along with data validity, accuracy, and discussion about other possibilities that could explain the findings.

“The entirety of the claim rests on cell phone location data, which doesn’t remotely show that people were actually using the drop boxes (it doesn’t have the granularity to show that, as opposed to just walking or even driving by),” said Kenneth R Mayer, Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who spoke to Reuters via email.

According to True the Vote founder Catherine Engelbrecht, who spoke in the documentary, the dataset had been validated because it was used by the organization to solve two murder cases that were “ebbing on cold case status”.

Only one murder case was detailed as an example in the documentary – that of eight-year-old Secoria Turner on July 4, 2020, in Atlanta – and which authorities told NPR was solved without anything to do with Engelbrecht ([here](#)).

D’Souza, meanwhile, claimed without offering evidence that the dataset had the “reliability of a fingerprint”, expanding in a later podcast interview that it was accurate to between “12 and 18 inches” ([here](#)).



Experts speaking to Reuters disagreed.

“I have never heard that geotracking using cell phones could have errors as low as 12-18 inches,” said Chen Qian, Associate Professor at the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at University of California, Santa Cruz. “This range is way below the ranges reported by scientists and engineers.

“A research paper written by AT&T and Purdue University researchers in 2020 predicted that the average location error of 5G networks would vary from 2 meters to >10 meters,” said Qian. “Note their results are simulated results in ideal settings, used for predictions. They are not real experiments, because 5G has not been available everywhere. In real environments the errors would be larger.” ([here](#))

Moreover, drop boxes tend to be in high-traffic areas such as public libraries, shopping malls, municipal buildings, or schools. For example, a map of drop boxes in the five metro Atlanta counties of Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Gwinnett and Clayton shows that all are clustered in busy locations likely to have high cell phone activity ([here](#)).

“My local drop box is in my public library, a location I pass probably 20 or 30 times a week,” said Paul Gronke, Director of the Elections and Voting Information Center at Reed College in Oregon ([evic.reed.edu/](http://evic.reed.edu/)). “Did I deposit 20 ballots or is my drop box on a heavily trafficked street? You tell me.”

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True the Vote said in the documentary it had ruled out people where it believed their “pattern of life” outside the election period involved travelling to nonprofits and drop box locations. They did not offer information on how they did this or who these people were.

However, Barry C Burden, Director of the Elections Research Centre at the University of Wisconsin- Madison ([elections.wisc.edu/](https://elections.wisc.edu/)), told Reuters via email that there were still acceptable reasons for observed heightened activity during election periods.

He said: “Some of the individuals tracked might even have been election workers checking on or emptying the drop boxes, so it would be a sign of vigilance by election officials rather than nefarious behavior.”

## **SURVEILLANCE VIDEO**

To corroborate the geotracking dataset, True the Vote said it had compared it with surveillance video covering locations of some of the drop boxes.

They claimed to have access to 4 million minutes of footage, which was mostly from Georgia. The documentary makers said some of the surveillance cameras were turned off in Arizona and that there was no footage from Wisconsin. No information was provided about surveillance footage from Michigan or Pennsylvania.

Reuters was unable to examine these alleged minutes of footage, but the videoclips presented in the documentary alone do not provide proof of fraud.

When Reuters asked Engelbrecht via email how “mules” identified via geotracking data were then matched to surveillance footage, she responded: “Matches are made by comparing the location and time stamp of the video to the location and the time stamp of the individual device.”

The documentary shows several surveillance clips said to reveal “mules” stuffing fake ballots in the drop boxes.

In one clip, a couple of ballots appear to drop to the floor as one man goes to post; the documentary makers suggest this is suspicious, as well as the man allegedly posting the ballots late at night.

In another, a woman wearing a face mask and gloves is seen posting a ballot before turning to place her gloves in a nearby bin. It is claimed in the documentary that she is a “mule” because she was wearing gloves (to hide her fingerprints) and did not look at the bin, so must have had prior knowledge of it being there. The documentary makers did not appear to consider the possibility that the woman was wearing gloves, along with her face mask, as a personal protective measure against COVID-19.

The unidentified woman was also said to have visited “dozens and dozens” of drop boxes; however, no other clips of her, nor any further evidence, were shown.

Two other clips show men in separate locations taking photos of themselves posting their ballot, which the documentary makers allege was to provide evidence of the job done so the “mules” can get paid.

In a Fox News interview, Engelbrecht claimed the average number of visits by a “mule” to a drop box was 38 ([here](#)). Yet none of the surveillance videos showed the same person more than once.



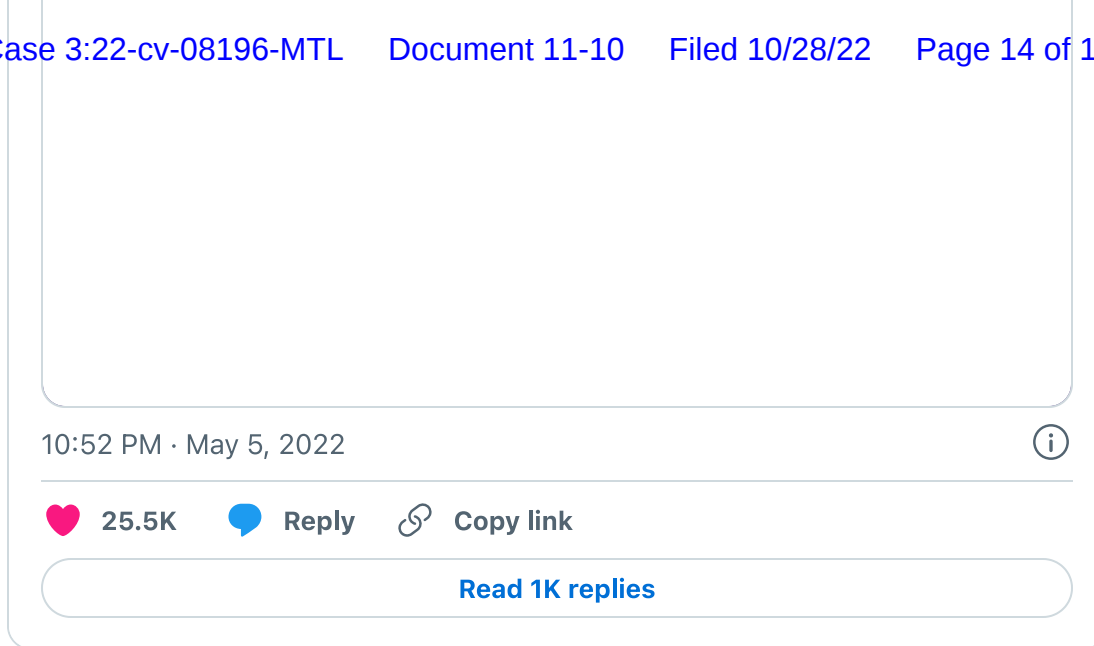
**Liz Harrington**  
@realLizUSA · [Follow](#)



The average ballot trafficker made 38 TRIPS to drop boxes.

And it's on tape!

[Watch on Twitter](#)



## BALLOT HARVESTING VS FRAUDULENT BALLOTS

Some of the people in Georgia who were presented in surveillance footage as so-called “mules” were seen posting more than one ballot at once, which the documentary makers suggested was proof of voter fraud.

But this doesn’t necessarily constitute fraud. Ballot harvesting, the posting of completed ballots on behalf of a third party, is legal in several states, including Georgia ([n-there](#)).

“Some of the so-called “mules” might have been legitimate family members putting in ballots in Georgia,” said Theodore Allen, Associate Professor at Ohio State University, specializing in the administering of elections.

“Many people need encouragement to vote and offering to collect and bring to ballot boxes is, in many states, a legal and legitimate way to increase voter participation which is often low.”

Reuters also spoke to M.V. (Trey) Hood III, Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Georgia, to understand the legality around dropping off

conflated, and there are protections in place in Georgia to prevent the posting of fraudulent ballots.

“[In Georgia] In 2020 we were using signature verification to verify absentee ballots, so there were safety mechanisms in place to ensure it wasn’t a fraudulent ballot.”

He added: “I haven’t seen any hard evidence being offered up that these ballots were fraudulent.”

Reuters looked into a video posted in May claiming to show one such “mule”. Pennsylvania county authorities debunked the “evidence” by confirming it showed a designated agent dropping ballots off on behalf of individuals who are unable to ([here](#)).

Ultimately, ‘2000 Mules’ speculates that the so-called ballot-traffickers were dropping off fraudulent ballots – but the film does not prove this. The ‘faked’ ballots were never opened and inspected, nor were the suspected “mules” on surveillance questioned, aside from one anonymous “informant” who says she never saw inside the supposed fraudulent ballots.

## **COULD BALLOTS BE FORGED?**

The documentary claims its investigation reveals the potential existence of 380,000 overall fraudulent ballots. And, it claims, if all of these contained falsified votes for Joe Biden, the revelation is significant enough to have blocked a win by Donald Trump.

Listing all of the steps needed to falsify a ballot, Gronke told Reuters: “1) You need a falsified ballot with a unique bar code, printed on special paper, and a special

envelope. If the claim is that you've somehow obtained 400,000 original ballots without the elections officials or voters knowing, how precisely did you do this?

“2) You need to successfully forge the voter’s signature. 3) You need to deposit the envelope and have it validated by a local official.

“Congratulations! Besides committing a felony, you have now cast ONE fraudulent ballot. Now you need to figure out how to do that hundreds of thousands of times, in different jurisdictions, with different ballot styles and different voting materials.”

Gronke’s sentiments were echoed by Christopher B. Mann, Associate Professor of Political Science at Skidmore College, who told Reuters: “If there are 400,000 people who had their ballot collected and returned for nefarious reasons, there should be significant numbers of people willing to tell their story. It is hard for two people to keep a secret. Asserting that 400,000 people are keeping a secret is beyond credibility.”

Reuters has previously explored the safeguards in place that make forging ballots on behalf of others difficult ([here](#)), ([here](#)).

## 2020 ELECTION FOUND SAFE AND SECURE

False claims pedaled by former U.S. President Donald Trump and his followers blaming widespread voting fraud for the 2020 election results have been rejected by courts, state governments and members of his own former administration ([here](#)).

U.S. election security officials have said the election was “the most secure in American history” ([here](#)), ([here](#)).



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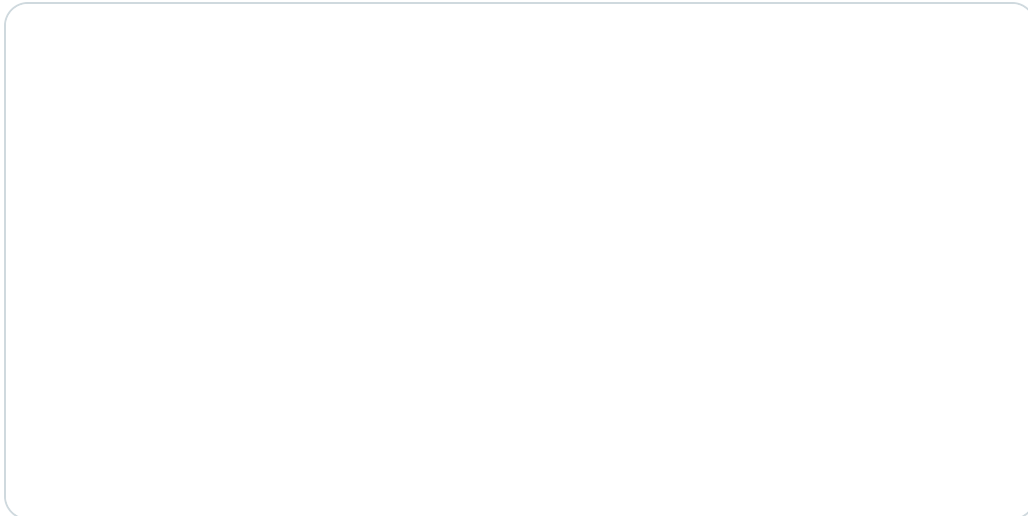
NEW: A joint statement from the Elections Infrastructure



Government Coordinating Council and Sector Coordinating Council Executive Committees regarding the 2020 general election:

[nased.org/news/jointstat...](https://nased.org/news/jointstat...)

#TrustedInfo2020 #Protect2020



5:47 PM · Nov 12, 2020



247



Reply



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Former U.S. Attorney General William Barr, the nation's top law enforcement official under Trump, said on Dec. 1, 2020, that he had not seen any evidence of fraud that would have changed the election results ([here](#)).

Furthermore, more than 50 lawsuits brought by Trump or his allies alleging election fraud or other irregularities were dismissed by state and federal judges ([here](#)).

## VERDICT

The documentary "2000 Mules" does not provide any concrete, verifiable evidence of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election. Technology and election integrity experts consulted by Reuters also did not find the geolocation, surveillance or any other information presented showed plausible evidence of fraud.

This article was produced by the Reuters Fact Check team. [Read more about our fact-checking work here](#) .

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All quotes delayed a minimum of 15 minutes. See [here](#) for a complete list of exchanges and delays.

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# **Exhibit B**

US MARKETS CLOSED

In the news

▼ Dow Jones +0.61% ▲ Nasdaq -1.88% ▲ S&P 500 -0.61% ▲ META -24.56% ▼ TSLA +0.2%

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# Former AG Bill Barr laughs at Dinesh D'Souza's election conspiracy theory film '2000 Mules' in January 6 Committee deposition

Grace Panetta Jun 13, 2022, 1:16 PM



US Attorney General Bill Barr is pictured on October 15, 2020. [Jeff Roberson/Pool/AFP via Getty Images](#)

**Former AG Bill Barr mocked and trashed the conclusions of film '2,000 Mules.'**

**The film, made by Dinesh D'Souza and True The Vote, claims fraud took place at ballot drop boxes.**

**Barr called the film, which has also been panned by experts, as "unimpressive" and "indefensible."**

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Former Attorney General Bill Barr mocked the premise of "2000 Mules," a conspiratorial movie that purports to show massive fraud with ballot dropboxes in the 2020 election. The film has been widely panned by experts and fact-checkers.

The committee's hearing on Monday focused on the election lies President Donald Trump and his allies spread to discredit the 2020 election results. The hearing featured extended clips from Barr's sworn deposition before the committee.

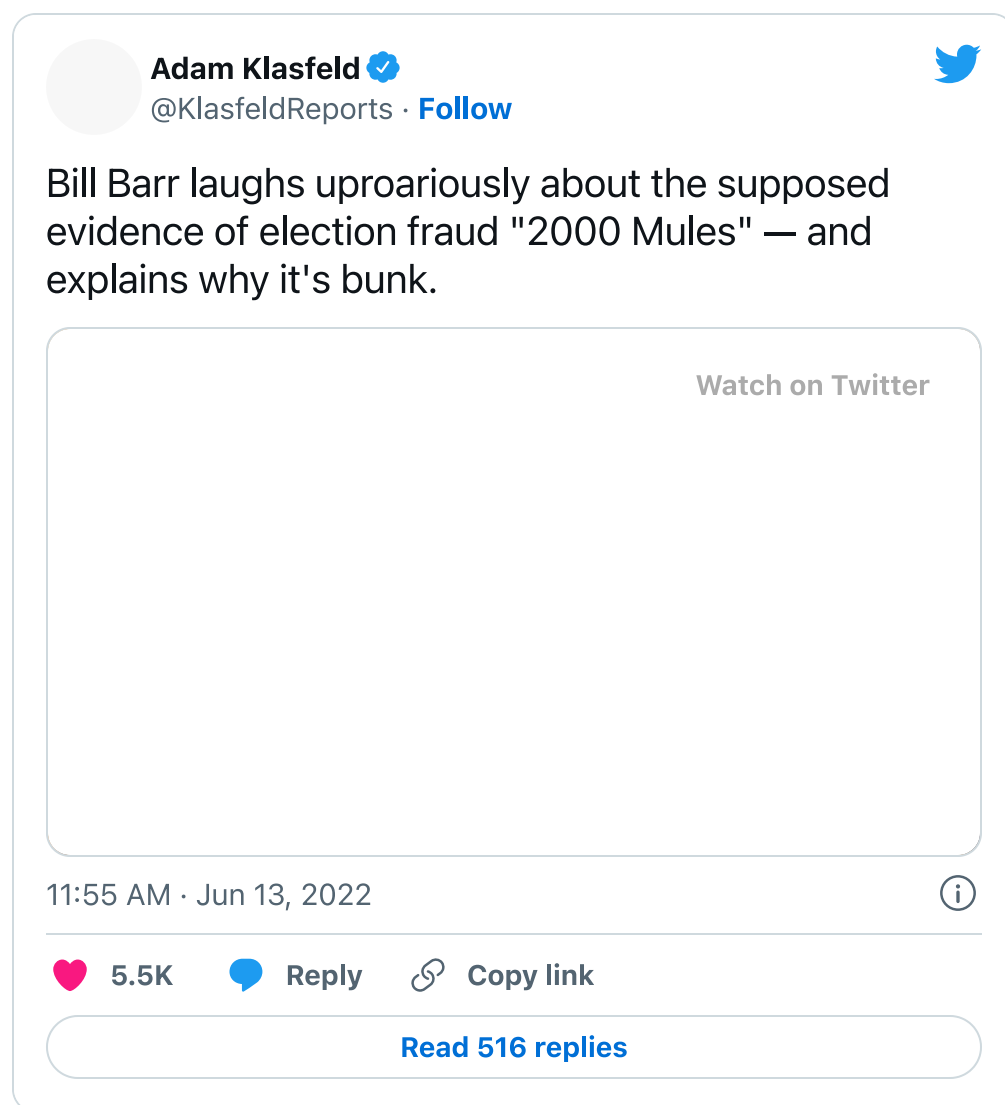
"The election was not stolen by fraud, and I haven't seen anything since the election that changes my mind on that, including the '2000 Mules' movie," Barr said in his deposition, laughing.

The film, made by conservative activist Dinesh D'Souza and conservative election-focused group True The Vote, uses surveillance footage, photographs, and geolocation data from cellphones in key swing states to argue that people -- the "mules" -- committed election fraud by essentially stuffing ballot dropboxes with fraudulent ballots.

But election experts say that the evidence presented by the filmmakers isn't enough to show widespread improper activity with dropboxes, much less a conspiracy to steal the election.

"The [Georgia Bureau of Investigation] was unimpressed with it. I

"The cellphone data is singularly unimpressive," Barr added. "Basically, if you take 2 million cellphones and figure out where they are physically in a big city like Atlanta or wherever, by definition, you're going to find many hundreds of them that have passed by and spent time in the vicinity these boxes. And the premise that if you go by five boxes or whatever it was, that that's a mule, is indefensible."



The Associated Press' in-depth fact check of the movie described the film as "based on faulty assumptions, anonymous accounts and improper analysis of cellphone location data, which is not precise

One reason that cellphone data is an imperfect measure of how many ballots are dropped off at a dropbox is that many ballot dropboxes are located in high-trafficked, easily-accessible public spaces like libraries, town halls and other government buildings, and even grocery stores.

President Donald Trump's spokeswoman Liz Harrington also asserted that the cellphone data collected by the makers of "2,000 Mules" helped solve the murder of a young girl in Atlanta, a claim discredited by True the Vote themselves, who acknowledged to NPR they contacted law enforcement two months after arrests had already been made in the murder.

Barr described the photographic evidence in the film as "lacking" and noted that even if the filmmakers *had* shown that so-called ballot harvesting occurred, it wouldn't be enough to prove that those votes were fraudulent or would have swung the result of the election.

"Courts are not gonna throw out votes and then figure out what votes are harvested and throw them out," Barr said in his deposition. "The burden is on the challenging party to show that illegal votes were cast, that the votes were the result of undue influence or bribes...absent that evidence, I didn't see courts throwing out votes anyway."

D'Souza slammed the committee and Barr in a number of tweets, calling Barr ignorant and "a fat guy."

"The debunkers have themselves been thoroughly debunked. And all of them are too cowardly to debate the issue with me. As is the January 6 Committee " D'Souza wrote in a subsequent tweet

## Read next



### POLITICS

**Arizona AG asks the FBI to investigate the group behind the right-wing election conspiracy theory film '2000 mules'**

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# **Exhibit C**



## LEGAL

## Arizona AG's office asks feds to investigate conservative nonprofit True the Vote

The group propagated claims of vote fraud by relying on geolocation data, which became the central focus of the movie “2000 Mules.”



The letter, dated Friday, is particularly remarkable coming from the office of Brnovich, a Republican who once vied for Trump's support in a Senate GOP primary bid that hinged on false claims about the 2020 election results. | Bob Christie/AP Photo

By **KYLE CHENEY** and **NICHOLAS WU**

10/14/2022 10:00 PM EDT



The office of Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich is asking the FBI and IRS to investigate True the Vote, a conservative vote-monitoring nonprofit

Reginald Grigsby, an investigator with Brnovich's office, [described a series of questionable interactions](#) with the group's leaders and suggested there may be evidence of financial improprieties if the agencies pursued them.

"Given TTV's status as a nonprofit organization, it would appear that further review of its financials may be warranted," Grigsby wrote.

The letter, dated Friday, is particularly remarkable coming from the office of Brnovich, a Republican who once vied for Trump's support in a Senate GOP primary bid that hinged on false claims about the 2020 election results.

The IRS and the FBI's Phoenix field office did not immediately respond to requests for comment. A True the Vote spokesperson could not immediately be reached for comment.

Grigsby urged the federal agencies to pursue the group after what it described as multiple suspicious interactions with leaders Catherine Engelbrecht and Gregg Phillips. Grigsby said the pair met with state investigators three times since early 2021 and promised to provide data it said would prove widespread fraud in the 2020 election — but the evidence never arrived.

Even though the group never turned over the promised data, Grigsby wrote, it began publicly claiming that it had given the state a hard drive — a claim Grigsby indicated the group also made to the Arizona Senate and to the Phoenix office of the FBI.

"Not only is this patently false, TTV acknowledged via correspondence and during a meeting with them that they had not given us the information but that they would," he wrote.

True the Vote propagated claims of vote fraud by relying on geolocation data, which became the central focus of the movie "2000 Mules." Trump has cited the movie as proof the election was stolen, and he's praised the group's work. But the movie's claims have been sharply called into question by federal investigators and researchers who have tested its theories.

Former Attorney General Bill Barr delivered a forceful rebuke of the movie's premise in testimony to the Jan. 6 select committee. He told the panel that in any metropolitan area, geolocation data would likely show "hundreds" of people who passed by drop boxes on multiple occasions.

"The premise that if you go by a box, five boxes or whatever it was, you know that that's a mule is just indefensible," Barr said, adding, "It didn't establish widespread illegal harvesting," Barr said.

Despite Barr's mockery of the premise, Trump has promoted its claims both online and during his public events.

In an April 2022 meeting, Grigsby said the group claimed to have evidence of "243 mules" who had stuffed ballot boxes in Arizona. But they presented no hard evidence to back it up, he said.

In his most recent meeting with the group on June 1, Grigsby said Engelbrecht and Phillips indicated they had shared all their data with the FBI and were working with the bureau as informants. But he said the FBI's Phoenix field office quickly confirmed this to be false and said the group had, in turn, told FBI agents to contact Brnovich's office to obtain their data.

Grigsby also flagged the nonprofit status of the organization, noting the "considerable sums of money" they had raised while alleging massive voter fraud and promises to provide law enforcement with the information — even as they remained unable to provide the information.

**FILED UNDER:** FBI, ARIZONA, DONALD TRUMP, DONALD TRUMP 2020, 2020 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES, 2020 ELECTIONS,



## Huddle

A play-by-play preview of the day's congressional news



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# Exhibit D

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# **Exhibit E**

**Technology****“Big Lie” Vigilantism Is on the Rise. Big Tech Is Failing to Respond.**

Stolen-election activists and Trump supporters have embraced a new tactic in their campaign to unearth supposed proof of fraud in the 2020 presidential race: using social media to chase down a fictional breed of fraudster known as a “ballot mule.”



Alex Bandoni/ProPublica. Source Image: Mark Makela/Getty Images.

**by Andy Kroll**

June 17, 12 p.m. EDT

*ProPublica is a nonprofit newsroom that investigates abuses of power. Sign up to receive [our biggest stories](#) as soon as they're published.*

**Update, June 21, 2022:** Spokespeople for Facebook, TikTok and Twitter said they would remove posts flagged by ProPublica for violating their respective community standards policies. This story has also been updated to include comment from True the Vote, which the organization sent after our story published.

The dummied-up flyer bore the hallmarks of a real WANTED poster. A grainy photo of a woman outside an election office in the suburbs of Atlanta stamped with the word “WANTED.” An image of a sheriff’s badge and the phone number for the Gwinnett County Sheriff’s Office. The implication was clear: The woman was being sought by the local sheriff for voter fraud.

The flyer was fake, and though the sheriff’s office eventually called it out, the false poster went viral, amassing tens of thousands of shares, views and threatening comments on Facebook, Twitter and TikTok and raising fears that harm could come to the unidentified woman.

Stolen-election activists and supporters of former President Donald Trump have embraced a new tactic in their ongoing campaign to unearth supposed proof of fraud in the 2020 presidential race: chasing down a

Inspired by a conservative documentary film that has won praise from Trump and his allies — and debunking from critics including former Attorney General William Barr — self-styled citizen sleuths are posting and sharing photos of unnamed individuals and accusing them of election crimes. They are calling on their followers to help identify these “ballot mules,” who are accused of having violated laws against dropping off multiple absentee ballots during the 2020 election. A state lawmaker in Arizona has even encouraged people to act as “vigilantes” and catch future “mules.”

Promoting such false information violates the policies of Facebook, Twitter and TikTok. Facebook’s “[Community Standards](#)” says its policy is to remove content that incites harassment or violence or impersonates government officials. [Twitter](#) and [TikTok](#) have similar rules and guidelines for what can and can’t appear on their platforms.



Screenshot captured and redacted by ProPublica

ProPublica identified at least a dozen additional posts on Twitter, Facebook and TikTok that accuse unnamed individuals of being “ballot mules” and engaging in allegedly illegal activity. Some of these posts echo the “WANTED”-style language seen in the Gwinnett County meme, while others include similar calls to action to identify the individuals.

None of the posts reviewed by ProPublica include evidence that any of the people depicted in the posters engaged in illegal activity. Yet the social media companies have reacted slowly or not at all to such posts, some of which clearly violate their policies, experts say.

Disinformation researchers from the nonpartisan clean-government nonprofit Common Cause alerted Facebook and Twitter that the platforms were allowing users to post such incendiary claims in May. Not only did

the claims lack evidence that crimes had been committed, but experts worry that poll workers, volunteers and regular voters could face unwarranted harassment or physical harm if they are wrongfully accused of illegal election activity.

So far, there is no sign that any of the people depicted have been identified or suffered any threats.

Emma Steiner, a disinformation analyst with Common Cause who sent warnings to the social-media companies, says the lack of action suggests that tech companies relaxed their efforts to police election-related threats ahead of the 2022 midterms.

“This is the new playbook, and I’m worried that platforms are not prepared to deal with this tactic that encourages dangerous behavior,” Steiner said.

Spokespeople for Facebook, TikTok and Twitter said they would remove posts flagged by ProPublica for violating their respective community standards policies.

Thirty-one states allow a third party to collect and return an absentee or mail-in ballot on behalf of another voter. These laws help voters who are disabled or infirm, live in spread-out rural areas or reside on tribal lands with limited access to polling places or ballot drop boxes. In states with a history of absentee voting, both Democratic and Republican operatives have engaged in organized ballot-collection drives.

Critics, labeling the practice “ballot harvesting,” have sought to restrict its use, warning about the potential for fraud. However, incidents of proven fraud related to ballot collection are extremely rare. A database maintained by the conservative Heritage Foundation identifies just 238 cases of “fraudulent use of absentee ballots” since 1988. One high-profile case of fraud involving absentee ballots occurred in a 2018 North Carolina congressional race. A Republican operative engaged in a ballot-tampering scheme involving hundreds of ballots. The state election board later threw out the election result and ordered a redo. It was likely the first federal election overturned due to fraud, according to historians and election-law experts.

The phrases “ballot mules” and “ballot trafficking” — with their intentional echoes of the language of drugs and cartels — started to gain traction online in 2021, according to Mike Caulfield, a misinformation researcher at the University of Washington’s Center for an Informed Public. An analysis by Caulfield and his colleagues found that prominent Republicans including House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna Romney McDaniel invoked “ballot trafficking” last spring.

But it wasn’t until conservative provocateur Dinesh D’Souza and a discredited conservative group called True the Vote last fall began to tease findings that would later appear in D’Souza’s movie “2000 Mules” that uses of “ballot trafficking” and “ballot mules” shot up, according to Caulfield’s research.

The “2000 Mules” film claims that a network of thousands of people illegally stuffed ballot boxes in swing states to steal the presidency for Joe Biden. It draws heavily on the work of True the Vote, which purported to use surveillance footage and geolocation data to make its claims of illegal ballot activity.

True the Vote founder Catherine Engelbrecht said her group had never spoken with Barr and disputed the notion that True the Vote had not proven its claims about voter fraud. “I do think that when 80%+ of America is concerned about election integrity, something must be done to address the situation,” she said. “It is the failure of leaders across all branches of government, who have allowed lawlessness to be the new law, that we find ourselves where we do.” D’Souza did not respond to a request for comment.

Despite its flimsy conclusions, “2000 Mules” found an enthusiastic audience in Trump and his supporters. In early May, Trump screened the film at his Mar-a-Lago private club. The film has since earned nearly \$1.5 million at the box office, according to Box Office Mojo. In a recent 12-page letter responding to the public hearings organized by the Jan. 6 select committee, Trump cited “2000 Mules” nearly 20 times.

As the film’s dubious claims have spread online, stolen-election activists are creating and sharing online content purporting to reveal more “mules” and accusing those individuals of illegal behavior without actual evidence of wrongdoing.

The most striking example is the meme that depicts an older white woman leaving a ballot drop box in Georgia’s suburban Gwinnett County. The word “WANTED” appears above her head as does the image of a sheriff’s badge labeled “Gwinnett County” and the sheriff office’s phone number.

“Ballot mule,” the meme says. “If you can ID her, call Gwinnett Co. sheriff’s office.”

A spokeswoman for the Gwinnett County Sheriff’s Office says the meme is fake. The sheriff’s office hasn’t received calls purporting to identify the woman. The spokeswoman said that the office was investigating who created the meme.

ProPublica was unable to identify the woman in the “WANTED” meme. A spokesman for the Gwinnett County elections office confirmed that the name tag worn by the woman in the meme matched those worn by county election workers in 2020. He also verified that the drop box in the video was located outside of the county’s election headquarters.

The origins of the woman’s photo in the “WANTED” meme appear to point back to a Georgia businessman and self-described election-fraud investigator named David Cross.

For months Cross has posted short clips of surveillance footage showing people depositing ballots at drop boxes in Gwinnett County. Cross sometimes narrates these videos and makes unverified accusations of illegal ballot harvesting. In a clip that Cross posted online on May 3, an older white woman — the same woman in the “WANTED” meme — deposits multiple ballots into the drop box outside the headquarters for Gwinnett County’s elections office. In his narration, Cross accuses the woman of depositing as many as 35 ballots, though it’s not at all clear from

the video exactly how many ballots the woman deposited. “Totally illegal,” he says in the video. (Cross did not respond to requests for comment.)

Georgia law prohibits many third parties from submitting a ballot that’s not their own. However, the law makes exceptions for caregivers for the elderly and the disabled, immediate family members, members of the same household, in-laws, nieces, nephews, grandchildren and more.

Cross, the Georgia activist, has filed complaints with the State Election Board and secretary of state’s office alleging illegal ballot deliveries and citing his surveillance footage clips. Last month, the State Election Board dismissed three complaints alleging “ballot harvesting” after an investigation by the secretary of state’s office found that the alleged “mules” were voters dropping off ballots for themselves and family members.

A spokesman for Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger told ProPublica that the office has a pending investigation into the woman in the “WANTED” meme. The spokesman, Walter Jones, stressed that no one should assume that an individual shown in a video delivering multiple ballots is automatically guilty of a crime, nor would the ballots in question be invalidated even if someone had violated the state’s ballot-collection law.

The video published by Cross of the woman at the Gwinnett County drop box spread rapidly online. Twitter users accused the woman of being one of the “2000 mules” and urged their followers to “MAKE HER FAMOUS!” — in other words, reveal her identity and share it widely.

One Twitter user shared the woman’s image with the “WANTED” text and the fake Gwinnett County sheriff’s badge. “Once we find out who paid these people the whole story will become clear,” the account wrote. That tweet amassed more than 9,000 retweets and more than 14,000 likes before Twitter removed it.

The “WANTED” post spread across Twitter, Facebook and TikTok. A Facebook group called “Celebrities for Trump” shared it. “We need more if [sic] these,” the post said, referring to the WANTED sign. “Keep your eyes open. Report them all it is a crime.”

Several days after the “WANTED” flyer surfaced and reached a large audience, the Gwinnett County sheriff stated that the post was “false.” Yet despite the post impersonating a law-enforcement agency, social-media companies have been slow to remove it.

While Twitter removed dozens of posts with the “WANTED” sign, ProPublica was able to find instances of it still on the platform.

Disinformation researchers tell ProPublica that they also identified posts accusing people of being ballot mules in other states with laws that restrict third parties from submitting people’s ballots. “Mule right here in PA,” one TikTok post read. “Make this Upper Dublin resident famous #2000Mules #2000MulesDocumentary #2000MulesTheMovie.”

In Arizona, a Republican state senator named Kelly Townsend has encouraged people to camp out at ballot drop boxes and write down license plate numbers of people deemed to be suspicious. “I have been so pleased to hear of all you vigilantes that want to camp out at these drop boxes,” Townsend recently said. “So, do it. Do it.”



Even if “2000 Mules” were accurate — which experts stress it almost certainly is not — the ballot trafficking theory put forward by the film would not change the result of any election. Rick Hasen, a professor and election-law expert at the University of California, Irvine, says he believes the rigged-election message in “2000 Mules” is just the latest attempt to more broadly lay the groundwork for challenging and overturning the outcome of a future election.

“If you believe the last election was stolen, you’re going to be more likely to take steps to steal the next one back,” Hasen said. “It’s pretty obvious that what’s going on here is using false claims of fraud as a potential pretext to engage in election subversion in 2024 or another future election. That’s very dangerous for American democracy.”

*Do you have information about election disinformation, voter suppression or other threats to democracy? We want to hear from you. Fill out our [questionnaire](#) or contact reporter Andy Kroll directly at [andy.kroll@propublica.org](mailto:andy.kroll@propublica.org) or via Signal or WhatsApp at 202-215-6203.*

**Filed under —**  
Technology  
Democracy

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# **Exhibit F**

Democracy Challenged: A Look at the Historic Test on Democratic Norms >

# Hunting for Voter Fraud, Conspiracy Theorists Organize ‘Stakeouts’

A nascent effort to surveil drop boxes for potential fraud is taking shape in at least 10 states, worrying election officials and law enforcement.



By Tiffany Hsu and Stuart A. Thompson

Aug. 10, 2022

One night last month, on the recommendation of a man known online as Captain K, a small group gathered in an Arizona parking lot and waited in folding chairs, hoping to catch the people they believed were trying to destroy American democracy by submitting fake early voting ballots.

Captain K — which is what Seth Keshel, a former U.S. Army intelligence officer who espouses voting fraud conspiracy theories, calls himself — had set the plan in motion. In July, as states like Arizona were preparing for their primary elections, he posted a proposal on the messaging app Telegram: “All-night patriot tailgate parties for EVERY DROP BOX IN AMERICA.” The post received more than 70,000 views.

Similar calls were galvanizing people in at least nine other states, signaling the latest outgrowth from rampant election fraud conspiracy theories coursing through the Republican Party.

In the nearly two years since former President Donald J. Trump catapulted false claims of widespread voter fraud from the political fringes to the conservative mainstream, a constellation of his supporters have drifted from one theory to another in a frantic but unsuccessful search for evidence.

Many are now focused on ballot drop boxes — where people can deposit their votes into secure and locked containers — under the unfounded belief that mysterious operatives, or so-called ballot mules, are stuffing them with fake ballots or otherwise tampering with them. And they are recruiting observers to monitor countless drop boxes across the country, tapping the millions of Americans who have been swayed by bogus election claims.

In most cases, organizing efforts are nascent, with supporters posting unconfirmed plans to watch local drop boxes. But some small-scale “stakeouts” have been advertised using Craigslist, Telegram, Twitter, Gab and Truth Social, the social media platform backed by Mr. Trump. Several websites dedicated to the cause went online this year, including at least one meant to coordinate volunteers.

Some high-profile politicians have embraced the idea. Kari Lake, the Trump-endorsed Republican candidate for governor in Arizona, asked followers on Twitter whether they would “be willing to take a shift watching a drop box to catch potential Ballot Mules.”

Supporters have compared the events to harmless neighborhood watches or tailgate parties fueled by pizza and beer. But some online commenters discussed bringing AR-15s and other firearms, and have voiced their desire to make citizens’ arrests and log license plates. That has set off concerns among election officials and law enforcement that what supporters describe as legal patriotic oversight could easily slip into illegal voter intimidation, privacy violations, electioneering or confrontations.

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“What we’re going to be dealing with in 2022 is more of a citizen corps of conspiracists that have already decided that there’s a problem and are now looking for evidence, or at least something they can twist into evidence, and use that to undermine confidence in results they don’t like,” said Matthew Weil, the executive director of the Elections Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center. “When your entire premise is that there are problems, every issue looks like a problem, especially if you have no idea what you’re looking at.”



Screenshot from Truth Social

Mr. Keshel, whose post as Captain K inspired the Arizona gathering, said in an interview that monitoring drop boxes could catch illegal “ballot harvesting,” or voters depositing ballots for other people. The practice is legal in some states, like California, but is mostly illegal in battlegrounds like Georgia and Arizona. There is no evidence that widespread illegal ballot harvesting occurred in the 2020 presidential election.

“In order to quality-control a process that is ripe for cheating, I suppose there’s no way other than monitoring,” Mr. Keshel said. “In fact, they have monitoring at polling stations when you go up, so I don’t see the difference.”

The legality of monitoring the boxes is hazy, Mr. Weil said. Laws governing supervision of polling places — such as whether watchers may document voters entering or exiting — differ across states and have mostly not been adapted to ballot boxes.

In 2020, election officials embraced ballot boxes as a legal solution to socially distanced voting during the coronavirus pandemic. All but 10 states allowed them.

But many conservatives have argued that the boxes enable election fraud. The talk has been egged on by “2000 Mules,” a documentary by the conservative commentator Dinesh D’Souza, which uses leaps of logic and dubious evidence to claim that an army of partisan “mules” traveled between ballot boxes and stuffed them with fraudulent votes. The documentary proved popular on the Republican campaign trail and among right-wing commentators, who were eager for novel ways to keep doubts about the 2020 election alive.

“Ballot mules” have quickly become a central character in false stories about the 2020 election. Between November 2020 and the first reference to “2000 Mules” on Twitter in January 2022, the term “ballot mules” came up only 329 times, according to data from Zignal Labs. Since then, the term has surfaced 326,000 times on Twitter, 63 percent of the time alongside discussion of the documentary. Salem Media Group, the executive producer of the documentary, claimed in May that the film had earned more than \$10 million.

Mentions of “ballot mules” surged in May after the debunked documentary “2000 Mules” claimed that an army of operatives stuffed ballot boxes during the 2020 election.

#### Digital mentions of “ballot mules” per week



Note: Includes mentions on digital platforms including social media, broadcast, traditional media, and other online sites. Source: Signal Labs • By The New York Times

The push for civilian oversight of ballot boxes has gained traction at the same time as legislative efforts to boost surveillance of drop-off sites. A state law passed this year in Utah requires 24-hour video surveillance to be installed at all unattended ballot boxes, an often challenging undertaking that has cost taxpayers in one county hundreds of thousands of dollars. County commissioners in Douglas County in Nebraska, which includes Omaha, voted in June to allocate \$130,000 for drop box cameras to supplement existing cameras that the county does not own.

In June, Arizona lawmakers approved a budget that included \$500,000 for a pilot program for ballot box monitoring. The 16 boxes included will have round-the-clock photo and video surveillance, rejecting ballots if the cameras are nonfunctional, and will accept only a single ballot at a time, producing receipts for each ballot submitted.

Many supporters of the stakeouts have argued that drop boxes should be banned entirely. Some have posted video tours of drop box sites, claiming that cameras are pointed in the wrong direction or that the locations cannot be properly secured.

Melody Jennings, a minister and counselor who founded the right-wing group Clean Elections USA, claimed credit for the Arizona gathering on Truth Social and said it was the group’s “first run.” She said in a podcast interview that any surveillance teams she organized would try to record all voters who used drop boxes. The primaries, she said, were a “dry run” for the midterms in November. Ms. Jennings did not respond to requests for comment.

After the Arizona gathering, organizers wrote to high-profile Truth Social users, including Mr. Trump, claiming without evidence that “mules came to the site, saw the party and left without dropping ballots.” Comments on other social media posts about the event noted that the group could have frightened away voters wary of engaging, drawn people planning to report the group’s activities or simply witnessed lost passers-by.

On Aug. 2, Ms. Lake and several other election deniers prevailed in their primary races in Arizona, where a GoFundMe campaign sought donations for “a statewide volunteer citizen presence on location 24 hours a day at each public voting drop box location.” Kelly Townsend, a Republican state senator, said during a legislative

“I have been so pleased to hear about all you vigilantes out there that want to camp out at these drop boxes,” Ms. Townsend said.

Surveillance plans are also forming in other states. Audit the Vote Hawaii posted that citizens there were “pulling together watch teams” to monitor the drop boxes. A similar group in Pennsylvania, Audit the Vote PA, posted on social media that they should do the same.

In Michigan, a shaky video filmed from inside a car and posted on Truth Social showed what appeared to be a man collecting ballots from a drop box. It ended with a close-up shot of a truck’s license plate.

In Washington, a right-wing group launched Drop Box Watch, a scheduling service helping people organize stakeouts, encouraging them to take photos or videos of any “anomalies.” The group’s website said all its volunteer slots for the state’s primary early this month were filled.

The sheriff’s office in King County, Wash., which includes Seattle, is investigating after election signs popped up at several drop box sites in the state warning voters they were “under surveillance.”

One Gab user with more than 2,000 followers offered stakeout tips on the social network and on Rumble: “Get their face clearly on camera, we don’t want no fuzzy Bigfoot film,” he said in a video, with his own face covered by a helmet, goggles and cloth. “We need to put that in the Gab group, so there’s a constant log of what’s going on.”

Calls for civilian surveillance have expanded beyond ballot boxes. One post on a conservative blog cheers on people who monitor “any suspect activities before, during and after elections” at ballot-printing companies, vote tabulation centers and candidates’ offices.

Paul Gronke, the director of the Elections and Voting Information Center at Reed College, suggested that activists hoping for improved election security should push for more data transparency measures and tracking programs that allow voters to monitor the status of their absentee ballot. He said he had never heard of a legitimate example of dropbox watchdogs successfully catching fraud.

The prospect of confrontations involving self-appointed overseers largely untrained in state-specific election procedures, charged up by a steady diet of misinformation and militarized rhetoric, is “just a recipe for disaster” and “puts at risk the voters’ ability to cast their ballots,” Mr. Gronke said.

“There are ways to secure the system, but having vigilantes standing around drop boxes is not the way to do it,” he said. “Drop boxes are not a concern — it’s just a misdirection of energy.”

Cecilia Kang contributed reporting.

# Exhibit G





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## **Operation: Drop Box**



### **This Ballot Dropbox Is Under Surveillance**

Accepting compensation for harvesting or depositing ballots may be a violation of Federal Law  
(52 U.S. Code § 20511; 18 U.S. Code § 594)

Please report suspicious activity

## **Operation: Drop Box**

In our endeavor to secure our election from those who would cause this country harm, we have created Operation: Drop Box. For the upcoming election, we plan on watching the ballot boxes throughout Yavapai County.

We are asking for patriots to take a two hour shift to watch election drop boxes,

and stop the ballot box stuffing!



Case 3:22-cv-08196-MTL Document 11-10 Filed 10/28/22 Page 49 of 122

We need coordinators for every one of the 19 boxes, and patriots to fill shifts for every day, for 27 open voting days!

Yes, it's a big job, and it can't be done without YOU! Sign up today.

If you can take more than one shift during the 27 days, that would be awesome!

## Signup form for Operation: Drop Box.

**Name \***

First

Last

**Email \***

**Phone \***

**Address \***

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Zip Code

**Day and time you can watch**

**Location you can Watch \***

**Volunteer to be Town lead? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Comments**

**Submit**

**We are going to be doing two-hour shifts at each drop box location with a minimum of two people at a time.**

**Bring a phone or a camera.**

**If you see someone putting more ballots in than their own, take a picture of them, their car, and their license plate.**

**Do NOT engage. Contact us and we'll get in touch with Sheriff Rhodes who is already aware of what we are doing and will do what he can.**

**[Click Here for the](#)**



# Drop Box Locations

Copyright © 2022 The Lions of Liberty

Website Design by Virtual Property Developer



# Exhibit H

## Ballot ‘drop watch’ won’t intimidate voters, says ‘Lion’



The board of the Lions of Liberty group. (Photo courtesy of Lions of Liberty)



By Vyto Starinskas

Originally Published: October 5, 2022 8:46 a.m.

[Tweet](#)



VERDE VALLEY – The Lions of Liberty group won't be intimidating voters when their volunteers are watching voters dropping ballots into Yavapai County drop boxes, including those in the Verde Valley, from Oct. 12 to the General Election, according to member Luke Cilano.

Even though Lions of Liberty are linked to sister groups like the Oath Keepers and the Yavapai County Preparedness Group, Cilano said they are not part of any national group.

"We started this here locally" in November of last year, he said.

The conservative group is based in Prescott, and members come from Chino, Prescott Valley, Dewey, and several from the Cottonwood side of the mountain. He said they have 250 people on their email list, a web page and hold meetings at the Prescott Vibe Event Center.

The Yavapai County Sheriff's Office is aware of the group's plan to "box watch" voters at drop boxes outside polling places during the upcoming election and he said it's legal as long they stay 75 feet away and don't intimidate people.

Cilano said ballot harvesting has been a problem in other parts of the country. He didn't know if it was in Yavapai County, but they decided "we're going to sit and we're going to watch the drop boxes."

He believed another group was going on "ballot watch" in Maricopa County.

The Lions of Liberty volunteers will stand away from ballot boxes, observe and take a photo if they observe anything, he said.

They want to be in a position to see who is coming to the ballot box and how many ballots they are putting in there.

"If they are putting more ballots in there, we can take photo evidence and take to the sheriff," Cilano continued. The only time they will take a photo is if they see anything amiss.

"I expect him to do his job," if they turn over evidence to the sheriff, Cilano said. It is illegal in Arizona to put more than one ballot in the box other than your own, he pointed out.

That is not strictly true. State law does not limit how many secured ballots a person may drop off at a drop box for others as long as those "others" are their family members, other members of their household, or people for whom they are providing care.

On its webpage, the group was looking for volunteers to be in county towns with voting boxes, including Cottonwood, Camp Verde, Clarkdale, Jerome and VOC.

Cilano said they are not arresting anyone, they are not engaging anyone and not getting in anyone's way, but they are observing from a distance. If anyone engages them, he has given strict orders for his volunteers to leave immediately and call local law enforcement.

"We're not interested in altercations at all."

Asked if the Lions of Liberty volunteers will be noticed, Cilano said he thought so since he has gotten death threats already.

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# **Exhibit I**



## VICE News

# Armed Fringe Groups Are Gearing Up to ‘Protect’ Midterm Ballot Dropboxes

The groups, inspired by conspiracy theories and the Big Lie about the 2020 election, could deter some voters, experts warn.

TO By Tess Owen

October 6, 2022, 10:07am



SCREENSHOT OF A YCPT MEETING IN AUGUST LED BY JIM ARROYO, FORMER

ties to extremists, galvanized by conspiracy theories, are seeking to take matters into their own hands this election season.

Ballot dropboxes have become the central focus of election fraud conspiracy theorists, thanks to the debunked documentary *2,000 Mules*, by right-wing commentator Dinesh D'Souza.

That film claims that a shadowy network of hired “mules” in contested states were hired by nonprofits as part of a giant ballot trafficking operation to stuff dropboxes with fake absentee ballots, all with the goal of stealing the 2020 election from Donald Trump. The film was released in May, six months before the midterms, reinvigorated the “Stop the Steal” movement and inspired vigilante efforts around the country—in some cases spearheaded by innocuous-sounding groups that obscure the known ideologues and extremists behind them.

Lions of Liberty is the “political arm” of a newly-formed nonprofit called Yavapai County Preparedness Team (YCPT), led by the former vice president of Arizona’s Oath Keeper chapter, Jim Arroyo. At a meeting in August that was posted to YouTube, Arroyo explained that they had turned the Oath Keeper chapter into a corporate nonprofit under the name of YCPT, which in turn gave them the ability to get a bank account.

In an email to VICE News, Arroyo said that the Arizona chapter officially broke ties with the national leadership of the notorious militia group after it was implicated in the violent riot at the Capitol on Jan. 6. (Five members are currently standing trial for seditious conspiracy charges, including the group’s leader Stewart Rhodes. Prosecutors allege that Rhodes and his cohort plotted an “armed rebellion to shatter a bedrock of American democracy.”) However, they had been operating more or less independently from the national organization for about four years, said Arroyo; Rhodes broke ties with the Arizona contingent after they declined to assist in armed vigilante activities at the border, out of respect for Border Patrol.

particularly concerned about the period between midnight and 6 a.m. “If you saw the movie *2,000 Mules*” he said, that timeframe was “when the bulk of the problems happen, that’s when we will be on scene with a camera and flashlight.” Arroyo told VICE News that some volunteers might be armed. “This is Arizona; almost everyone is armed, all the time,” he said. “That’s not a big deal here.”

**Do Look  
Damning**

GREG WALTERS

10.05.22

Arroyo said he will likely pick up a couple of shifts to monitor dropboxes.

In the August meeting, Arroyo assured members of the crowd that they’d be welcome to continue wearing their Oath Keepers merch, even while conducting ballot dropbox surveillance. “Your shirts and hats are what tell the world you’re not ashamed to be an Oath Keeper, or afraid of the government just because of that crap that happened on January the 6th, which was completely staged. It was a setup,” Arroyo said, before acknowledging, “Yeah, they did something stupid beyond all belief.”

During the meeting, Arroyo also stoked fears of an imminent civil war. “This is not the same as (Black Lives Matter) and George Floyd or antifa. This is a direct confrontation with the federal government,” he said. “This is now the federal government of the United States of America in direct conflict with its own citizenry.”

The Lions of Liberty describe themselves as a “resolute nucleus of concerned, passionate conservative patriots who are determined to correct the course for our country which has been hijacked and undermined by global elites, communists, leftists, deep state bureaucrats, and fake news.” Their goal? “To bring God back to our leadership and win this spiritual battle for the soul of our nation.”

The Lions of Liberty aren’t the only ones calling for and coordinating vigilante activity around the midterm elections.

“The threat of groups of far-right vigilantes, some potentially armed, fueled by Big Lie misinformation, lurking near ballot dropboxes, could potentially deter some from casting their votes,” warned Burghart. “The possibility of conflict in such a scenario is real.”

Burghart added that “dropbox vigilantism” perpetuates unsubstantiated claims of rampant voter fraud that “keep the Big Lie alive and further erodes confidence in elections and democracy.”

Former Washington state Rep. Matt Shea runs On Fire Ministries, an apocalyptic Christian nationalist church in Spokane, and has been leading “training sessions” for prospective volunteers to monitor dropboxes.

“We are doing something for the community. How many of you watched *2,000 Mules*? Raise your hands,” said Shea during a service in September. “I think it would be good if we had some folks who were certified, trained, dropbox observers, in Spokane County.” The training took place on Sept. 30.

Shea is a particularly controversial character; a 2019 investigation by the Washington Legislature concluded that he’d “participated in an act of domestic terrorism” for his involvement in three armed conflicts against the federal government between 2014 and 2016, including the Bundys’ armed standoffs in Nevada and Oregon and an armed conflict with the U.S. Veterans Affairs Department in Priest River, Idaho.

And a group called True the Vote, which was involved in the *2,000 Mules* documentary, is also teaming up with the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA) to monitor dropboxes nationwide. CSPOA is headed by Richard Mack, who has long-standing ties to the militia movement, including to the Oath Keepers.

“The plan from national Big Lie groups, like True the Vote, is to use those “voter fraud” claims to get sympathetic sheriffs to intervene in elections,” said Burghart.

referencing QAnon posted a photo of their party to Trump's platform Truth Social, and credited Seth Keshel, a former U.S. Army intelligence officer and conspiracy theorist, for the idea.





SCREENSHOT FROM THE APP TRUTHSOCIAL SHOWING A "DROPBOX TAILGATE PARTY"

Brian Cates, a columnist for the fringe-right publication *The Epoch Times*, has long been a proponent of the “Big Lie” and has been riling up his more than 120,000 followers on Telegram around the idea of taking matters into their own hands this election season.

“The time for calling for people to just show up to vote is long past. We’re moving into another completely different era,” he wrote. “Citizens will be given the tools to monitor all the dropboxes and engage in massive real-time information operations in order to bring about election integrity.”

“Forewarned is forearmed,” he added. “An army of patriots is going to force compliance with the election laws in their states before these next elections are held.”

One of the primary examples of “evidence” of nefarious activity offered by 2,000 *Mules* was surveillance videos that appeared to show individuals posting multiple ballots into a dropbox, including in Georgia. Submitting multiple ballots on behalf of other people is known as “ballot harvesting,” and it is legal in several states, including Georgia.

However, the fact that submitting multiple ballots has been presented as a telltale sign of election fraud lays the groundwork for possible confrontations between dropbox “monitors” and people who are acting entirely within the law. (Right-wing political commentator Monica Matthews, from Clear Talk Media, even tried to remind her followers of this fact. “Before you all plan Dropbox tailgate parties to monitor the integrity of your elections—MAKE SURE you check your new state laws. Some states allow harvesting,” she wrote on Twitter in August. “Confronting people at dropboxes could land you in jail.”)

in Washington to drop off multiple ballots at once on behalf of family members.

The signs also had a QR code that allowed passersby to report “suspicious activity” to the King County Republican Party (whose chair disavowed the vigilante activity). Amber Krabach, a GOP activist, QAnon conspiracy theorist and member of the Kings County Republicans’ “Election integrity Committee”, was behind the signs. The county elections office asked the sheriff’s department to investigate whether Krabach had broken a state law barring civilians from influencing someone’s vote within 25 feet of a ballot dropbox. They didn’t press charges, but they did refer the matter to the FBI.

All these vigilante efforts are taking place against a backdrop of increasingly incendiary rhetoric from GOP figures and far-right forums alike, about what will happen if they get even so much of a whiff of “voter fraud” this election season.

“If our election systems continue to be rigged and continue to be stolen, then it’s going to lead to one place—and it’s bloodshed,” said ex-Congressman Madison Cawthorn at a GOP event in North Carolina this summer.

On Patriots.win, a pro-Trump forum, some have discussed the need to bring guns to monitor dropboxes. Someone shared an article from the right-wing Gateway Pundit claiming they’d found evidence of massive voter fraud in Detroit during the 2020 election. “We need people waiting for that shit this time and take that shit at gun point,” someone responded. “Use walkie-talkies and don’t park anywhere near there or use fake plates and a vehicle wrap.”

Others, like Arroyo from YCPT, have stoked fears of an imminent civil war instigated by the Democrats. “Keep your powder dry until after the midterms,” one person wrote. “No matter what, they are going to try like hell to provoke a civil war before then.”

“Hold the line till Nov... then do whatever the fuck you gotta do,” another user on patriots.win wrote.



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**TAGGED:** [ELECTIONS](#), [OATH KEEPERS](#), [VIGILANTISM](#), [BREAKING THE VOTE](#), [THE EXTREMISM DESK](#), [DROPBOXES](#), [TRUE THE VOTE](#), [2,000 MULES](#)

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# **Exhibit J**

# Why, CPT?: Arizona Oath Keepers as a microcosm for the movement

This piece is an analysis of the YCPT's views, connections, and influence. Much of this piece is based on over fifty hours of footage drawn from 23 YCPT meetings and 9 trainings, 4 "COVID check-ins", and an assortment of interviews or podcasts involving the group's leader, Jim Arroyo.

By [admin < https://militia.watch/author/hstall/>](https://militia.watch/author/hstall/)

June 28, 2021 < <https://militia.watch/read/ycpt-az-ok/>>



• • •

After the storming of the US Capitol Building on 6 January 2021, media has been trying to figure out who the Oath Keepers are. 60 Minutes, 3 months after the riot, [interviewed < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32h3Ua4nksg>](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32h3Ua4nksg) 4

[minutes-capitol-riots-oath-keepers-militia-video-2021-06-20/](https://www.cbsnews.com/video/60-minutes-capitol-riots-oath-keepers-militia-video-2021-06-20/)> the segment, providing the group more airtime. These Oath Keepers were four members of a Prescott, Arizona area organization known as the Yavapai County Preparedness Team.

Who are the Yavapai County Preparedness Team (YCPT)? The YCPT is an Arizona Oath Keepers chapter, previously directly part of the Stewart Rhodes-led national organization but now autonomous and independent. They still, however, call themselves Oath Keepers and use Oath Keepers iconography and ideology to describe themselves. This article explores their structure, their relationships to the right, and where it looks like they are heading.

This is a very long article, so MilitiaWatch has prepared a first “TL;DR” (too long; didn’t read) that hits at some of the core points from this investigation without the goose chases and too-in-the-weeds writing the MW audience might be accustomed to at this point. You can read that here:

## TL;DR — Why, CPT?



This post is a summary meant to cover the in-depth work featured in the article here. Summary: The Yavapai County Preparedness Team (YCPT) is a former Oath Keepers affiliate based in Arizona. They are led by Jim Arroyo and his wife, Janet. The husband-wife duo incorporated the YCPT into a state-recognized non-profit in 2019 and ... Continue reading



## YCPT Structure

Prior to the split with Rhodes, the Arizona Oath Keepers (as they were once known), partially rebranded as the Yavapai County Preparedness Team (YCPT). There are several reasons for why this happened, which will be covered below. Directly relevant to the structure of the YCPT was a growing disenchantment with an absent national organization. The YCPT’s leader expressed this both to journalists and to his organization, saying that the relationship to the national organization was not worth the energy.



This does not mean that the YCPT has never had a relationship with the national organization running Stewart Rhodes' Oath Keepers. The YCPT's lead said during a meeting that the group's name is "Yavapai County Preparedness Team" in part due to a conversation with Rhodes, during which the YCPT lead got Rhodes' blessing to create a separate non-profit organization.

This non-profit entity, created under the Arizona group's name, was in fact incorporated in the state of Arizona as a "Community Service". Federally speaking, this places the YCPT's nonprofit under the "Disaster Preparedness and Relief Service" subcategory as part of the "Public Safety, Disaster Preparedness and Relief" category of organizations. In the articles of incorporation, the YCPT claims to be an organization without members. Below is the leading portion of the YCPT's articles of incorporation in the state of Arizona, detailing this:

Arizona Corporation Commission - RECEIVED: 1-12-2019  
Arizona Corporation Commission - FILED: 1-19-2019

99012219CM01

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

**NON-PROFIT CORPORATION**

**ENTITY INFORMATION**

ENTITY NAME:	Yavapai County Preparedness Team
ENTITY ID:	1942413
ENTITY TYPE:	Domestic Nonprofit Corporation
EFFECTIVE DATE:	01/19/2019
CHARACTER OF BUSINESS:	Community Service
CORPORATION WILL HAVE MEMBERS:	NO
CORPORATION WILL NOT HAVE MEMBERS:	YES

As shown above, the articles to establish this 501(c)3 were filed at the start of 2019. The YCPT's organization brings in less than \$50,000 in annual revenue so its directors are only required to file a Form 990-N each fiscal year. Due to this setup, very little information about the organization, including its on-the-books revenues and spending, is made public. However, there is so far only a record of the group's 2019 filing. This could be due to lags in processing on behalf of the state, given that the organization is still recognized as in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission.

The YCPT is led by James 'Jim' Arroyo and his wife Janet, who both reside in Chino Valley, Arizona. Jim was previously the vice president of the Arizona Oath Keepers and is currently the Director, Incorporator, and President of the YCPT. Janet is the Secretary of the YCPT and handles the group's correspondence, note-keeping, and most of their social media.

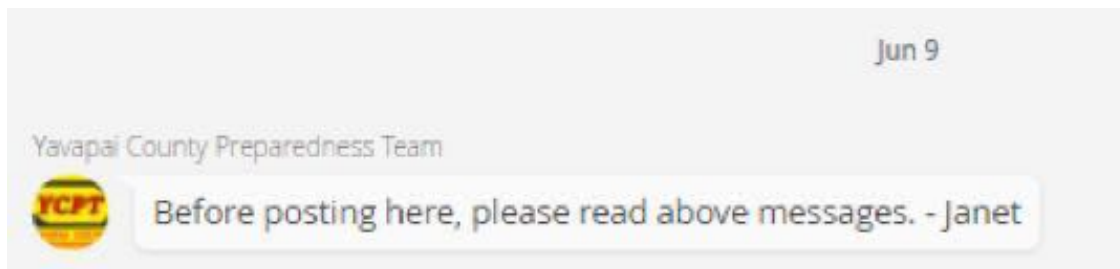


Photo of Jim Arroyo from the Military Phonies site, where they **debunk** < <https://militaryphony.com/2018/12/27/james-arroyo-us-army-ranger-part-of-operation-eagle-claw-blog-of-shame/>> his claimed involvement in Iran hostage rescue op, "Operation Eagle Claw"

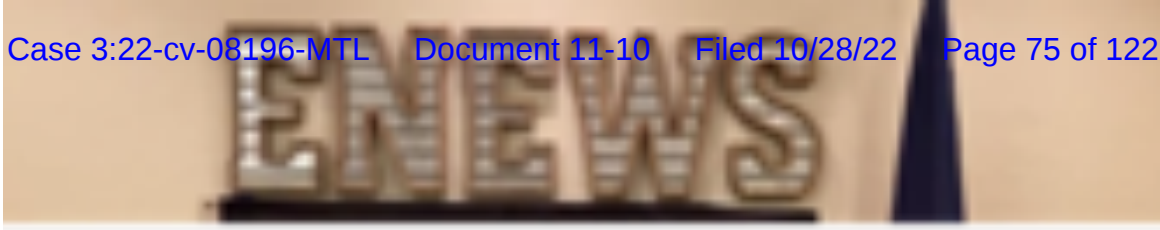
Jim works as a gunsmith at Mazy's, a pro-police gun store located in Chino Valley.

In March 2020, as COVID-19 restrictions began to be put in place throughout the US, Jim detailed on a podcast the "panic buying" happening at his store, describing the sales as "unbelievable", adding that "probably 25-30%" of buyers were first-time gun buyers.

Janet Arroyo, Jim's wife, acts as the group's secretary and takes a backseat when compared to Jim in the YCPT meeting structure. Janet, however, does handle a lot of the group's social media presence. She often signs her engagement on behalf of the YCPT account with her name:



The Yavapai County Preparedness Team has created numerous sub-teams within their ranks. One of the more important ones is the Neighborhood Preparedness Groups (NPGs), which operate simultaneously as neighborhood watch and would-be militias. Gary Harworth runs the NPG program. Here is YCPT lead Arroyo and YCPT NPG lead Harworth explaining the NPGs at the Prescott E-News filming desk (more on the E-News later):



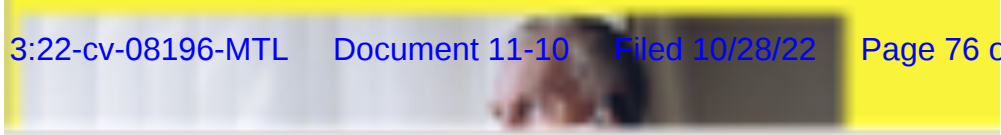
Screencap of transmission for Prescott E-News featuring Jim Arroyo and Gary Harworth

Harworth, like Jim, was one of those who appeared in the 60 Minutes piece on the YCPT (originally airing in April 2021, but reairing in June). He notably said during the interview that “when things get a little chaos-y around you, you have to be able to take care of yourself, defend yourself, protect your family [and] those you love—that’s part of the Constitution”, seemingly indicating towards his primary function within the Arizona Oath Keepers milieu and what drives him: self-defense and the notion of protecting one’s loved ones.

• • •

## **On the NPGs**

Gary Harworth’s Neighborhood Preparedness Groups (NPGs) have a lot of related text and video on the group’s website, including this amazing intro page, perhaps hinting at their target client:



One of the most important functions of the NPGs, according to meeting footage recorded by the YCPT, is to react and response to BLM and ‘Antifa’ in NPG-controlled areas. This involves linked communications channels that are connected to a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) that is ready to show up armed to stand off against these perceived adversaries. This should sound fairly familiar to those who have been tracking both Oath Keepers movements specifically or militia units more broadly – the NPG in a lot of ways takes on the specific roles of a militia unit that the YCPT claims to have moved beyond.

Within this reaction paradigm, YCPT NPG members are expected to gather ‘intel’ on the situation to which they seek to respond. Jim lays out in a video but also in YCPT NPG handouts a system for documenting the highest quality data on the ‘units’ they are tracking. Below is the “SALUTE Report” format:

# SALUTE Report

**S) Size** – Number of troops, vehicles, aircraft

**A) Activity** – What are they doing? Direction of travel.

**L) Location** – Grid coordinates, mile markers, cross streets, landmarks.

**U) Unit / Uniform** – Describe best as possible.

**T) Time and Date** – Absolutely vital!

**E) Equipment** – Accessories on aircraft, weapons, what is being towed by vehicles, etc.

ATTACH PHOTOS IF POSSIBLE

Send to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

YCPT SALUTE Report form, acquired from YCPT internal files

Right off the bat, the reader will note that the ‘S’ in SALUTE stands for size, which is specified as “number of **troops**“, pointing to the perception of adversaries as military gatherings. That “aircraft” are also listed in this element of the reconnaissance report speaks to potentially broader targets, e.g. modern military units, as well. This is then repeated once more under ‘E’ for equipment.

The NPGs, as described above and elsewhere on the YCPT online ecosystem, also seek to build out a robust ‘intel’ infrastructure. This set-up is partially based

1. Gaining subject matter expertise
2. Removing bias from our thinking
3. Arriving at accurate conclusions

It’s unclear how rigorously either of these are followed within NPG units, but the overall YCPT structure speaks to major failures to adhere to these baselines. Take, for example, this 15 October post by the YCPT mods, which shares a pdf of the “Antifa Manual”:



When asked about the manual’s source, the moderator replies that “A member said they found it left behind”, though the YCPT has yet to have engaged with antifascists in the street and the file is a series of screenshots of a supposed manual “Dropped in Eugene on May 29, 2020 during a Riot.”, first page reproduced below:



The ‘manual’ is an obvious hoax, and a **simple web search < <https://www.google.com/search?q=the+antifa+manual>** of “the antifa manual” turns up as a first result a **page < <https://www.adl.org/disinformation-antifa-manual>** from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) titled “Disinformation: Antifa manual”. This page by the ADL links to 2017 Snopes **debunking < <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/antifa-manual-online/>** of the false document and pointing to the first poster of the document as an August 2017 Imgur upload by a literal Nazi. The ADL also specifically discusses the iteration of the document that includes the Eugene riot leading line as a widely circulated disinformation document during the summer of 2020. The **riot <**

Uncovering the non-validity of this document took MW less than 15 seconds to search on Google, without using any fancy OSINT tricks. If the YCPT mods are unable to do this, how can they claim that NPGs follow an intelligence doctrine that isn't equally as flawed, biased, and inaccurate?

The NPGs fit into a larger prepping hierarchy, which moves from most discrete to most broad in this order:

- Individual preparedness
- Family preparedness
- NPGs
- Community Preparedness Teams (CPT)

All of these levels include staples of prepper lists, everything from water to comms channels to weapons (described on their sites as “Firearms for every adult, capable teenaged children” and “One rifle, one pistol, in common calibers only. Preferably on AR platform for magazine interchangeability. Pistols are a personal choice”). Other equipment for these teams include such items as “palm pilots”, “night vision”, “tactical clothing”, and “good socks”.

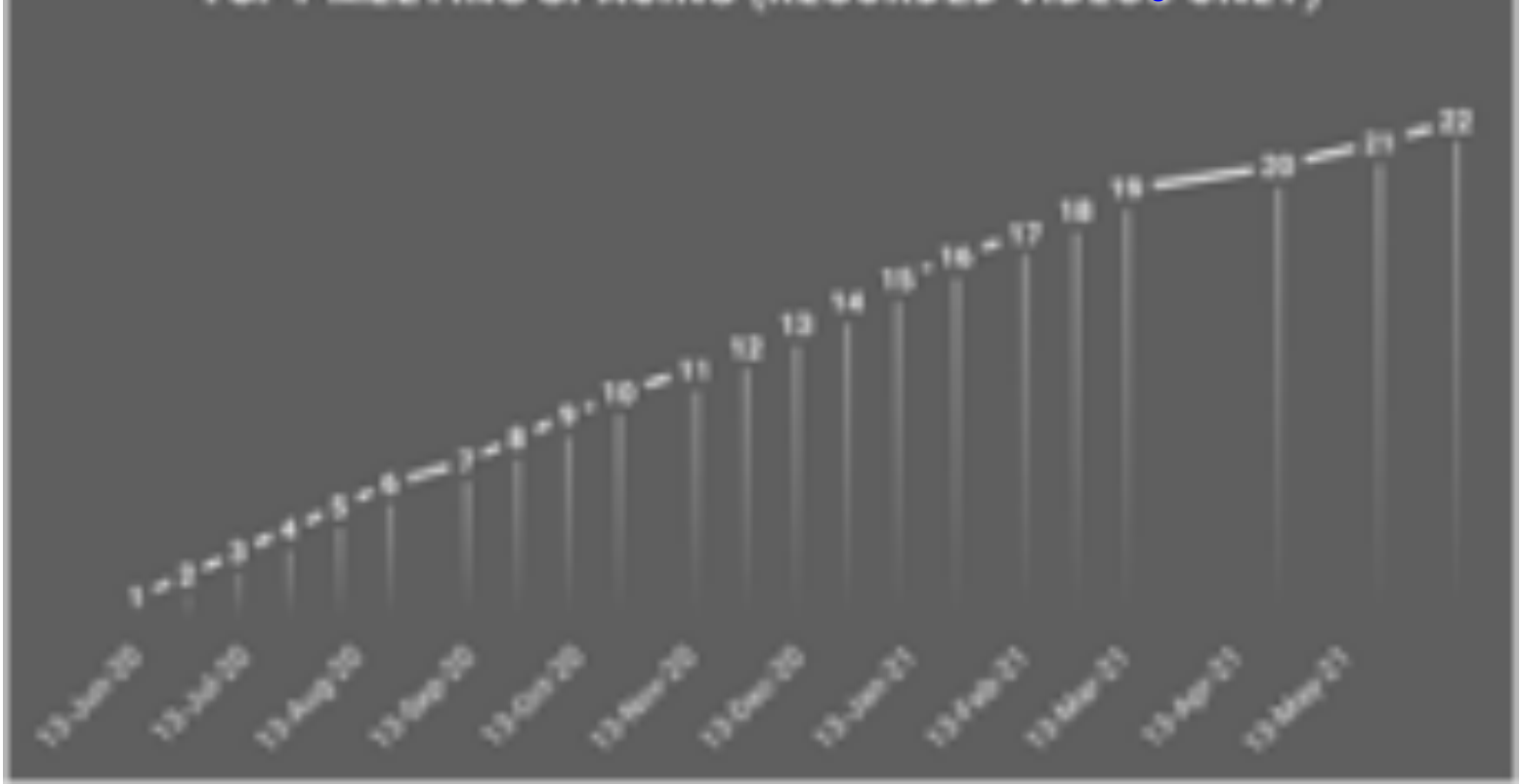
The Community Preparedness Teams (CPT) is the superstructure by which the YCPT operates, which is something they are now pushing at a greater scale. This will be covered more in-depth later, but first, some notes on the group's events schedule.

## **Schedule**

The YCPT keeps a fairly regular schedule, usually meeting every other Saturday for a two- to four-hour-long meeting led by Jim Arroyo in Prescott, Arizona. These meetings cover a range of topics (many of them well-tread by now) and are all recorded by the YCPT team, who then upload the recordings on their media channels.

To show how regular these meetings usually are, here is a graph of each of the 22 meetings the YCPT has posted online, alongside the meeting's date:





The chart of these meeting dates is fairly evenly spread, with only a few jolts in the YCPT's biweekly schedule. It appears that despite many people opting to avoid group meetings during the summer and fall of 2020 due to the virus's spread, the YCPT actually launched their recorded group meetings at that time.

*Note: there is \*technically\* a 26 October 2019 YCPT meeting that was recorded and uploaded to YCPT media channels, but it is a major outlier on the graph.*

These meetings cover a range of topics, but mostly repeat a lot of the same material. Looking at the content of these 22 meetings, 100% of the meetings discuss guns or firearms explicitly. All but one meeting discuss the topics of 'Antifa', Donald Trump, and civil war. Civil war seems to be a constant feature of these meetings, and the one meeting not to discuss civil war was the group's meeting right after the 2020 election, which did discuss civil unrest and violence though not civil war specifically. Democrats and Black Lives Matter were discussed by Jim Arroyo and his friends 90.0% and 86.4% of the time, respectively. Cumulative discussion of these topics are charted below, with lapses in mention portrayed as 0 on the y-axis to show gaps.

## YCPT MENTIONS OF KEYWORDS

Cumulative number of videos mentioning the keywords “BLM”, “Antifa”, “Democrats”, “Trump”, “Guns/Firearms”, and “Civil War”, with no mention marked as 0 to show meetings not discussing them.

These meetings are occasionally also supplemented with additional training material or vlogs from Jim. The training material comes in the form of a lecture to a camera, covering topics such as home remedies, survival foods, or “neighborhood security”. These lectures usually are recorded and posted on off weekends, allowing for more YCPT content to be consumed on a near-weekly basis. The vlogs have mostly been in the form of a COVID-19 “check in” while Jim sips coffee from a YCPT-branded mug, usually 15-30 minutes.

During these vlogs, Jim provides his viewers with such insights as referring to the mid-April COVID-19 numbers as “wrong”, adding that “we are in the midst of a propaganda campaign the likes of which we’ve never seen”.

The content of these vlogs varies between political theorizing, claims against public health departments, and assorted prepper tips. In a May 2020 video, Jim discusses details on bleach for several minutes, interjecting advice on how to encourage friends and family to get into prepping between providing his views on the cleaning product.

Many of these vlogs are posted on YCPT media but recently have also found a home in the Prescott E-News media channels, citing Jim Arroyo as the writer/creator.

• • •

The group primarily meets at First Southern Baptist Church of Chino Valley. Here's how that was determined.

First, there's this post from the First Southern Baptist Church of Chino Valley (FSBCCV), which discusses an Oath Keepers member who made "inappropriate comments" in a Chino Valley community group. In the post, the FSBCCV details that the Yavapai Country Preparedness Team "meets on our property" in this 22 July 2020 post:

Last weekend, July 11, 2020, questions were raised about the Oak Springs, Plaquemine County, Mississippi, board, that meets on our property. Questions and concerns came about because of inappropriate comments that were posted on the Oak Valley Community Facebook page. The comments in question were posted by an individual and not to the Oak Springs Organization. The individual has been contacted by the Oak Springs and dealt with.

As a result of the comment the Oak Springs Organization has been labeled as racist, white supremacist, and portrayed as a hate group. We have investigated this matter and discovered that the Oak Springs Organization does not in any way shape or form practice, endorse, or tolerate racial prejudice or hatred toward any group. They welcome anybody to view their meetings which are posted on the YouTube channel for "Oak Springs Organization" to view their meetings.

Furthermore, the First Southern Baptist Church (FSBC) of Oak Valley, MS welcomes all people of all nationalities and does not endorse any form of racial prejudice. FSBC has not and will not tolerate inciting violence towards anyone. While FSBC cannot control the conduct of any individual's social media post, we will call out those who use statements as well as any party that we are affiliated with.

We continue to share the love of Jesus Christ and welcome anybody to come and worship the Holy Spirit.

First Southern Baptist Church of Oak Valley, MS

3 Comments · 1 Share

A Facebook post concerning the YCPT using their space ([live link < https://www.facebook.com/FSBCCV/posts/3330303420354521>](https://www.facebook.com/FSBCCV/posts/3330303420354521) )

This location is corroborated as the core YCPT meeting place by a few other clues from the YCPT chatter Mewe. First, four months ago, the YCPT account posted that attendees could park at a Safeway and then drive to the church in one car:



There is, in fact, a Safeway just down the street from the First Southern Baptist Church (FSBC), accounting for about a 4 minute drive parking lot to parking lot:



A month later, another post includes the address of the church as the meeting location, down to the specific building (“C”):

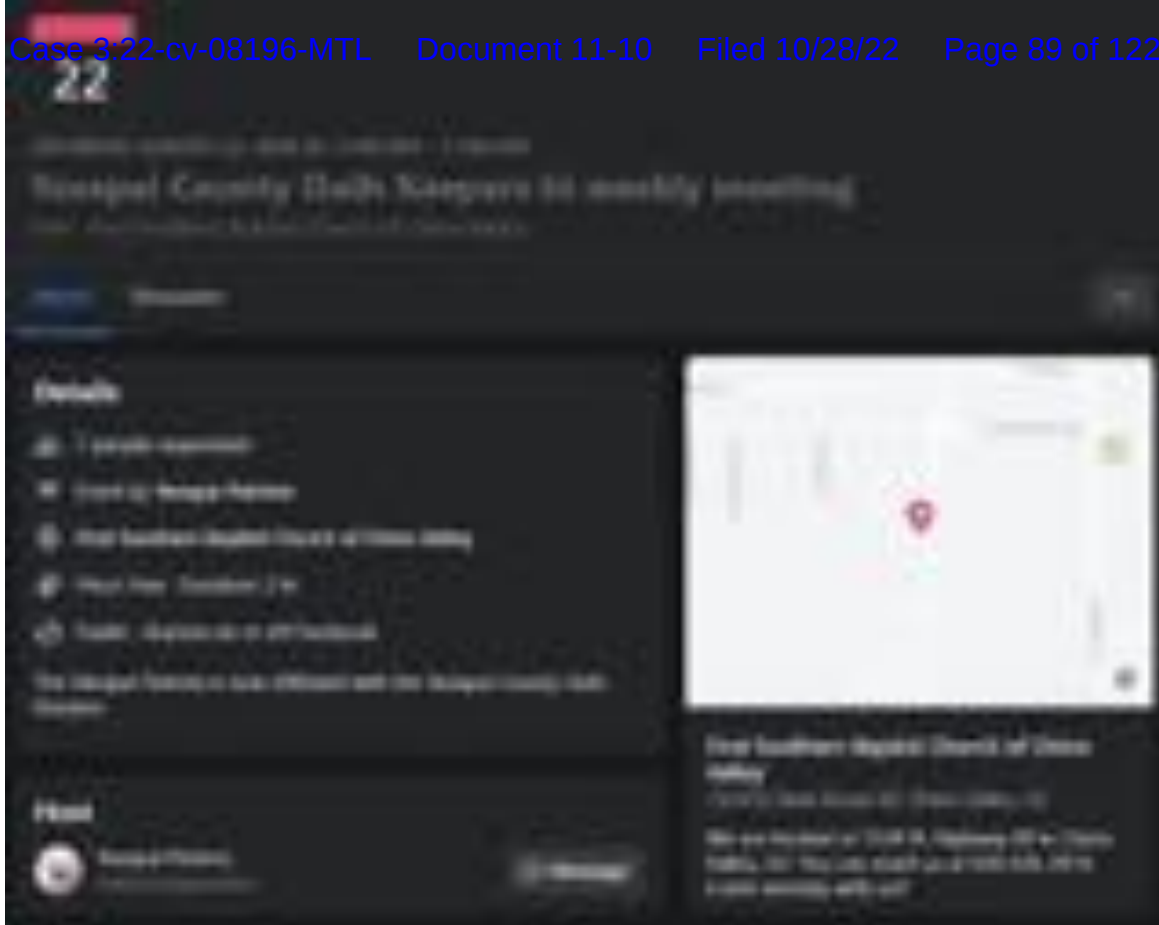


But more recently, here is a post for a \*scheduled\* training class on 21 June 2021 just before this article's publication. The event lists the "First Southern Baptist Church in Chino Valley" as "where the OK/YCPT Meetings are held":



Another late summer 2020 Facebook event for a "Yavapai County Oath Keepers bi weekly meeting" included the FSBCCV as a meeting location, hosted by an organization known as the "Yavapai Patriots".





Old Facebook event, hosted by the Yavapai Patriots ([live link < https://www.facebook.com/events/first-southern-baptist-church-of-chino-valley/yavapai-county-oath-keepers-bi-weekly-meeting/1658559864306187/>](https://www.facebook.com/events/first-southern-baptist-church-of-chino-valley/yavapai-county-oath-keepers-bi-weekly-meeting/1658559864306187/) )

The Yavapai Patriots are another important recent development to be discussed further below, too.

## Oath Keepers relationship

The YCPT formed directly out of the national organization run by Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes. In 2015, the YCPT even got a pat on the back from the national organization, who reposted a positive news article about Jim's organization on their site:



However, a recent fixture of YCPT media presence has been their continuing claim that they are no longer affiliated with the national Oath Keepers organization. Arroyo puts a timeline to this, saying in a recent meeting that he hasn't talked with Rhodes in "over two years". But it wasn't always this way, as Jim has discussed even in the last year and six months the process by which the YCPT's non-profit was created. Specifically, he summarizes a conversation that he and Rhodes allegedly had about forming the YCPT so that the group could apply for funding via grants federal and otherwise. The YCPT was incorporated in 2019 so Jim's "two years" statement is at least close to that timeline.

Though the YCPT may have broken up with Rhodes, they clearly haven't broken up with the idea of the Oath Keepers. Jim still wears OK gear, the group still maintains that they adhere to the 10 "Orders We Will Not Obey" outlined by Rhodes in 2009, and they still refer to their movement colloquially as Oath Keepers. They do this while simultaneously and fervently saying that the Oath Keepers are not a militia. This is in direct contradiction to the Oath Keepers founder's opinion of the movement, which both he and national Oath Keeper writers have defined as a "militia" in begging President Donald Trump to deputize the national organization for violence.

Ultimately, the definition of "militia" isn't as important as the notion that the Oath Keepers nationally and the YCPT's NPGs specifically, see themselves as armed arbiters of peace in direct opposition to movements to their left (from BLM to 'antifa' to the Democratic Party).

## Connections to the GOP state apparatus

The Yavapai County Preparedness Team is quite well connected to their geographically-specific GOP state apparatus. At minimum in August 2020, November 2021, and March 2021, Arizona State Representative Quang Nguyen spoke at meetings for the organization. Nguyen said *just ahead of the contentious 2020 election* that not only was the Democratic Party the “Communist Party of America”, but that “the only good commie is a dead commie”, to thunderous applause. Quong is also the head of the Arizona State Rifle and Pistol Association and has used YCPT appearances to push for membership of the organization. Quong also identified himself in the March 2021 meeting that he “might be the only Oath Keeper down [in the Arizona Legislature]” alongside Wendy Rogers, for which he clarified “Yes. So one in the Senate, one in the House. And I’m not exactly real shy about it either.”

Wendy Rogers, an Arizona State Senator, has also boasted about her appearances at YCPT events, calling herself a member of the Oath Keepers on her Twitter page after attending an Arizona Oath Keepers meeting in Cottonwood. YCPT lead Jim Arroyo has also referred to Arizona State Representative Judy Burges as an ally of his movement, too.



Wendy Rogers speaking to a YCPT meeting, via her [Twitter < https://twitter.com/WendyRogersAZ/status/1368398965113257989>](https://twitter.com/WendyRogersAZ/status/1368398965113257989)

YCPT meetings have been frequent campaign stops for would-be elected officials. In June 2020, US Senate candidate Daniel McCarthy described the current political moment of the day as “a literal war”, saying that “the United States is actually in the middle of a war right now... and that’s why you’re here.” Despite being a member of the Council for National Policy, McCarthy (a highly-moneyed conservative network which Anne Nelson [describes < https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/shadow-network-9781635573190/>](#) as a “pluto-theocracy”) lost the Republican primary 3:1 to Martha McSally, who in turn lost to Democrat Mark Kelly.

Selina Bliss, a GOP candidate for Arizona State Representative, spoke at a June 2020 YCPT meeting before she lost a primary to Quang Nguyen and Judy Burges, both of whom went on to win against the Democratic candidate, Judy Stahl, for the two open seats as part of the 2020 election.

GOP candidate Harry Oberg, now an elected member of the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors, attended a July 2020 meeting of the YCPT, too. He spoke just after Jim described “your House of Representatives [and] your US Senate” as the group’s “domestic enemies”.



July 2020 photo of Gosar posing with a man in a Proud Boys shirt while another man in an Oath Keepers stands nearby, in Prescott Square.

[Photo via Vaughn Hillyard < https://twitter.com/VaughnHillyard/status/1279484319312953344>](#).

One of the three current members of the Arizona Corporation Commission, Jim O’Connor, also spoke at the June 2020 YCPT event that Selina Bliss spoke at.

YCPT lead Jim Arroyo has also claimed that US Representative Paul Gosar, who is representing Arizona, has met with the group, telling them that they are “in [a civil war], we just haven’t started shooting yet”. Gosar attended a 4 July 2020 event in Prescott, Arizona, where he took photos with men in Proud Boys shirts while a man in an Oath Keeper shirt looked on (see photo at left, via Vaughn Hillyard).

Paul Gosar is a far-right politician with connections to White Nationalists. He skipped a vote in the House to attend and [speak <](#)

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/paul-gosar-white-nationalist-](#)

chanted his name < <https://www.azmirror.com/2021/03/01/paul-gosar-spoke-to-a-white-nationalist-conference-and-they-chanted-his-name/>> in support. He's also one of the members of the far-right "America First Caucus" that just released a policy < <https://www.fastcompany.com/90626471/should-the-america-first-caucus-sound-an-alarm-about-white-nationalism>> platform in mid-April 2021. This caucus claims < <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/america-first-caucus-would-champion-anglo-saxon-political-traditions/>> to push < <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/16/politics/marjorie-taylor-greene-america-first-caucus/index.html>> 'a uniquely Anglo-Saxon political tradition', a very thin dogwhistle even rejected < <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewsolender/2021/04/17/america-first-caucus-rejected-even-by-right-wing-freedom-caucus/?sh=2ddc7ae336a8>> by some other right-wing caucuses like the 'Freedom Caucus'. The platform was so controversial, that three days after its release, the AFC's frontwoman, Marjorie Taylor Greene, said she was suspending < <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewsolender/2021/04/17/marjorie-taylor-greene-calls-off-america-first-caucus-following-backlash/?sh=135d2a164198>> the caucus. As Trump was waffling over "many fine people" on "both sides", Representative Paul Gosar continued < <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/10/06/arizona-congressman-repeats-bogus-claim-that-charlottesville-violence-was-left-wing-plot/>> to repeat the obviously false < <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona/2017/10/05/arizona-rep-paul-gosar-pushes-far-right-conspiracies-charlottesville-george-soros/737205001/>> claim < <https://www.businessinsider.com/paul-gosar-charlottesville-riots-george-soros-conspiracy-2017-10>> that 2017's Unite the Right in Charlottesville VA, which led to the murder of Heather Heyer, was a 'left-wing plot'. Gosar repeated similar dubious claims < <https://www.businessinsider.com/paul-gosar-charlottesville-riots-george-soros-conspiracy-2017-10>> after the storming of the US Capitol Building on J6.

The Prescott E-News blog, which is unabashed in its admiration for the Oath Keepers in general and the YCPT specifically, has also detailed a lot of these relationships, writing < <https://prescottnews.com/index.php/2020/10/04/oath-keepers/>> just ahead of the 2020 election the following:



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**“SINCE 2016, I HAVE ATTENDED A NUMBER OF OATH KEEPER MEETINGS IN CHINO VALLEY AND BEEN INVITED TO SPEAK DURING POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, MANY OTHER LOCAL OFFICIALS AND CANDIDATES INCLUDING REP. NOEL CAMPBELL, SHERIFF SCOTT MASCHER, SHERIFF-ELECT DAVID RHODES, COUNTY ATTORNEY SHEILA POLK, COUNTY SUPERVISOR CRAIG BROWN AND REPRESENTATIVE-ELECT JUDY BURGESS HAVE ALL SPOKEN AND BEEN WARMLY RECEIVED AT OATH KEEPER MEETINGS. REPRESENTATIVE-ELECT QUANG NGUYEN, A VIETNAMESE REFUGEE, RECENTLY SPOKE TO A STANDING ROOM ONLY CROWD ABOUT HIS LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM AND HIS SUPPORT FOR THE SECOND AMENDMENT.”**

The previous statement is written by David Stringer, the owner and publisher of the Prescott E-News, who describes his media organization’s role in engaging with the YCPT as part of the Prescott E-News’ stance that they are “committed to providing a platform for [the YCPT’s] vital public service.”

David Stringer is a disgraced public official who was pushed to **resign** < <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona/2018/12/12/david-stringer-controversy-why-did-arizonans-prescott-voters-elect-him/2230605002/>> from the Prescott City Council over racist comments in 2018. Stringer was **recorded** < <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona/2018/11/30/arizona-rep-david-stringer-facing-calls-step-down-said-african-americans-dont-blend/2166952002/>> in November 2018 expanding on his views on “multiculturalism”, saying that there aren’t “enough white kids to go around” in Arizona’s public schools, saying non-white Americans do not “blend in” after coming to the US, and calling immigration an “existential threat”.

Allegations related to this episode have featured highly on the Prescott E-News platform Stringer manages, including in an **interview** < <https://www.facebook.com/eNewsAZ/videos/467105077495417>> he hosted of himself with Prescott E-News staffer Glenn Martin. Behind the two, chatting at a table in July 2020, a “Stringer for County Attorney” sign sits below an “ENEWS” sign.

David Stringer chats with Glenn Martin for an internal interview in the Prescott E-News blog, allowing Stringer to use his journalistic platform to campaign

Technically, the Prescott E-News is not registered as an incorporated body in the state of Arizona. However, at the street address that the Prescott E-News team works (115 E Goodwin Street), there is a media company named “Specialized Publishing LLC” run by David Stringer that appears to be the body that controls the Prescott E-News. This Specialized Publishing LLC was founded in 2016 by Lynne LaMaster, who now runs CopperState news. Lynne lists on her LinkedIn that she was the owner and founder of “Prescott eNews” from June 2000 through May 2020. On the Arizona Corporation Commission’s site, the “Specialized Publishing LLC” previously owned and operated by LaMaster changed hands in April 2020, to be operated by Stringer at the 115 East Goodwin Street location:



The above filming location, used for most if not all Prescott E-News interviews and webcasts filmed inside, is the same location that Arroyo and Harworth discussed the YCPT's NPG units. This is the same location that a multitude of Jim's webcasts were recorded from for YCPT media channels (which have since been removed by the group from major platforms, but are all on Prescott eNews channels). Here's one, featuring the same "ENEWS" sign and Arizona flag and an "OATH KEEPERS" flag in place of a campaign sign:



One such video series recorded at the Prescott E-News webcast table is a November 2020 take from Jim Arroyo on “The Coming Civil War”, a 1-hour-long discussion in two parts that was also removed from YCPT media channels.

Glenn Martin, the host with the Prescott E-News who interviewed David Stringer and has interviewed Jim and Janet Arroyo several times, is also a member of the YCPT’s Mewe group and actively posts as though he is not solely an observer but an outright member of the organization. Here he is around Christmas addressing the group as “Patriots”:



Glenn is a fairly constant poster in the YCPT's Mewe group, posting 18 times to the group's wall and in the chat within the day of writing this post, during which he shared a screenshot of a post by the aforementioned far-right AZ representative Quang Nguyen, adding, "This is his freshman term... wait till his next term.... He's just warming up. Conservative Republican and Oath Keeper.....".

Paul Gosar, the right-wing GOP politician linked to white nationalist organizing and an originator of Arizona's seemingly never-ending Stop the Steal endeavor, has also had his content reposted on the Prescott E-News site ([archive < https://web.archive.org/web/20210120200650/https://prescottenews.co](https://web.archive.org/web/20210120200650/https://prescottenews.co)

<https://www.facebook.com/eNewsAZ/posts/3987504357953048>>).

The YCPT site and media pages also give more insight into the group's connections. The YCPT site has numerous pictures in a slideshow. Among these is a photo taken including Mike Rice (the group's sole visible Black member) and Allen West, a high-profile Black Tea Party representative from Florida.



Allen West and Mike Rice ([archive <](#)  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20210617213912/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Mike-Rice.jpg>>.)

The above photo is likely at a campaign event but is presented as promotional material for the YCPT. Rice is wearing an Oath Keepers shirt and a United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA) morale patch on his hat, theater seating visible behind the two.

Other right-wing figures, such as Dave Hodges of “The Common Sense Show”, which spends a lot of time posting on caps lock about “CHICOMS” and “WW III”.



Dave Hodges and Jim Arroyo ([archive < https://web.archive.org/web/20210428211832/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Dave-Hodges-Jim.jpg>](https://web.archive.org/web/20210428211832/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Dave-Hodges-Jim.jpg))

In 2016, The YCPT also was apparently engaged in polling place observation, according to Jim Arroyo. They did this in Arizona at the same time as Roger Stone’s “Stop the Steal” efforts of that election were underway in the state. Arroyo **told** <https://kjzz.org/content/390334/questions-build-over-line-between-fraud-prevention-voter-intimidation-polls-arizona> journalists he and other Oath Keepers were there as part of “a surveillance operation”.

• • •

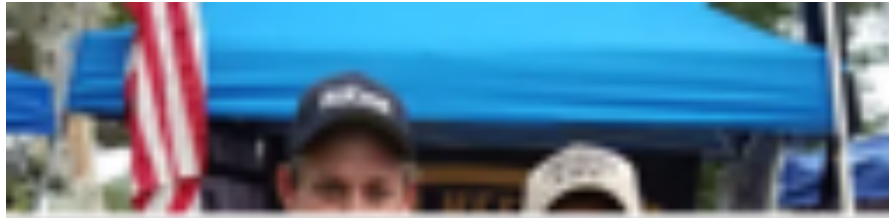
## Connections to police

In the **60 Minutes interview** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32h3Ua4nksg> of Jim Arroyo, Jim stated that active law enforcement are part of their group. He said this to push the group’s professionalism and knowledge. It’s a bit unclear about which officers are, but the group’s connections to law enforcement are easily detectable.

Among the YCPT meetings of 2020, at least one former NRA volunteer law enforcement instructor took the microphone to talk to the chapter. This man, first name Frank, claimed to have formerly provided instruction to the Maricopa

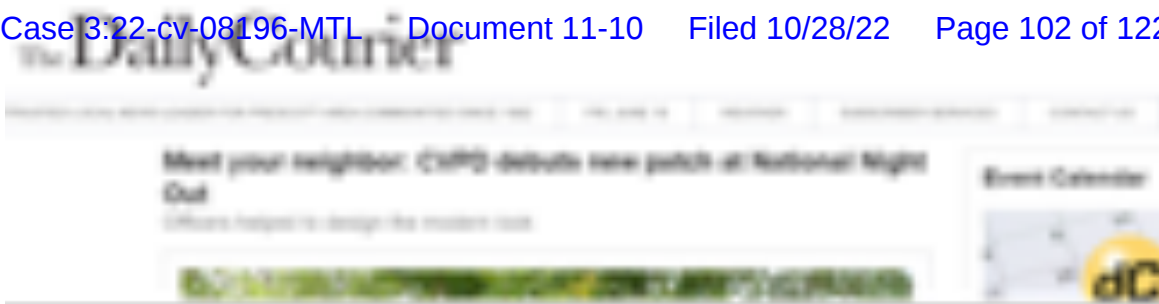
because of her faculty position at Prescott College, in the YCPT's own backyard. The Oath Keepers claim to be fighting against "neo-Marxists", so much of Frank's critique of Cullors is related to her interviews in which she identifies herself as a scholar of Marx.

The YCPT photo slideshow also features Jim Arroyo standing in front of an Oath Keepers tent next to an unnamed police officer wearing a shirt emblazoned with "Chief of Police" on it.



Man in "Police Chief" shirt with Jim Arroyo in front of an Oath Keepers tent ([archive < https://web.archive.org/web/20210617214440/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Tent.jpg>](https://web.archive.org/web/20210617214440/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Tent.jpg))

First up is confirming that this casualwear is part of a police department's uniform. Thankfully, a quick search for Chino Valley police results in an [article < https://www.dcourier.com/news/2016/aug/03/meet-your-neighbor-cvdpd-debuts-new-patch-national-/ >](https://www.dcourier.com/news/2016/aug/03/meet-your-neighbor-cvdpd-debuts-new-patch-national-/) with the following photo, wherein the man on the left wears the same shirt as the man in the photo above, sans the "Chief of Police" stitching:



Two Chino Valley Police Department employees, showing two modes of CVPD dress. At left, a casual polo. At right, a formal uniform.

These two men are featured in an article about announcing a new police patch at a “National Night Out”, a pro-police community festival held in many locations in the US. The Chino Valley website has a [webpage <http://www.chinoaz.net/362/National-Night-Out>](http://www.chinoaz.net/362/National-Night-Out) devoted to this exact event, describing its goals:

Home | Neighborhoods | Department | Police Department | Crime Prevention | National Night Out

## National Night Out

Neighborhoods throughout Chino Valley join forces with thousands of communities nationwide for the “Annual National Night Out” (NNO) crime and drug prevention event. National Night Out, which is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch (NATWO) and co-sponsored locally by **Chino Valley Police Department**, will involve over 16,540 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities, and military bases around the world. In all, over 38.1 million people are expected to participate in “America’s Night Out Against Crime”.

**National Night Out** is designed to: (I) Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, (II) Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime efforts, (III) Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police community partnerships, and (IV) Send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

### Contact Us

**Charles Wynn**  
Chief of Police  
Police Department

Chino Valley AZ city website describing the “National Night Out” event in their city

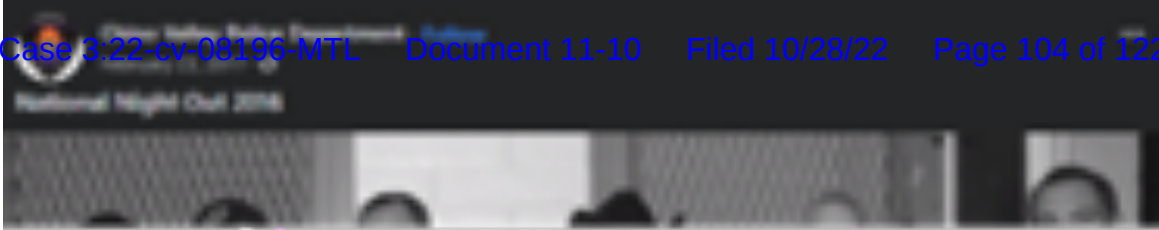


In the screenshot above, the CVPD's chief is listed as "Charles Wynn", who had a 2015 profile in the Daily Courier, the same outlet as published the story on the department's new "modern" looking patch. In his profile, he is seated at a desk and named as "Chuck Wynn":



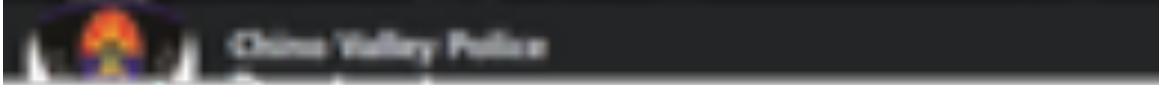
Chino Valley Police Department Chief Chuck Wynn, featured in a local paper

The National Night Out appears to be a pretty big deal in Chino Valley, and has become a yearly tradition known for the seasonal pro-cop party. In a recap [video](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1273747172662209) < <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1273747172662209> > with an assortment of strange skits about the musical acts for the 2016 Night Out, Chief Wynn is visible, wearing his casual shirt and a confused look:



The Chino Valley Police Department also has sold patches and hats at Mazy's, the gun store where YCPT leader Jim Arroyo works as a gunsmith:





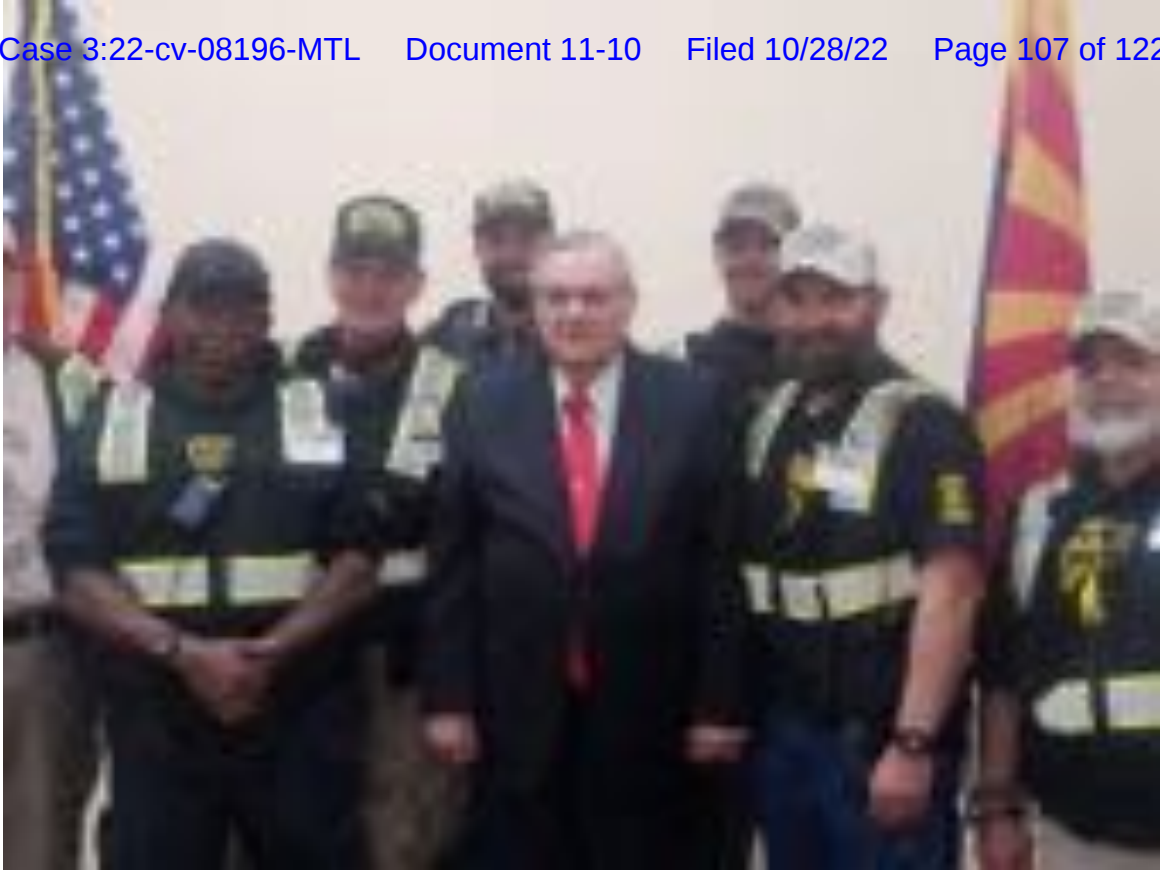
Post on the Chino Valley Police Department's Facebook ([link < https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=2514038325299748&id=656334361070163> \)](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2514038325299748&id=656334361070163))

Prescott E-News indicated that they attended a YCPT meeting with Sheriff Scott Mascher in attendance. The YCPT's slideshow also has a photo of Mr. Mascher from before he retired:



Scott Mascher's photo, as it appears on the YCPT's site ([archive < https://web.archive.org/web/20210428211554/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SHERIFF-SCOTT-MASCHER.jpg>](https://web.archive.org/web/20210428211554/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SHERIFF-SCOTT-MASCHER.jpg))

The same is the case for far-right Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who took a glamor shot with multiple YCPT members, including Mike Rice and Jim Arroyo, here:



Joe Arpaio visits the YCPT for a photo op ([archive < https://web.archive.org/web/20210428211548/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/OK-Security-w-Sheriff-Arpaio.jpg>](https://web.archive.org/web/20210428211548/https://ycpt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/OK-Security-w-Sheriff-Arpaio.jpg) )

Joe Arpaio was notably given a **presidential pardon** < <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/23/joe-arpaiio-donald-trump-signals-presidential-pardon-for-controversial-sheriff>> by Donald Trump regarding Arpaio's **charges** < <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/31/us/sheriff-joe-arpaiio-convicted-arizona.html>> related to his commitment to continue racial profiling against suspected Latino immigrants in Arizona.

The connections and comraderie with police isn't something of the past, either, as the YCPT plans to hang out with police for a fundraiser a few days after this post was written:

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT!

Corn Hole Tossing - Sunday, June 27 @

The Chino Valley Police Foundation is holding a Corn Hole Tournament at 2 pm on Sunday, June 27 at Memory Park in Chino Valley.

Entry fee is \$25.00 per two-person team.

Please contact Sofia at [REDACTED] to enter your team.

This sounds like a great way for friends and family to enjoy a Sunday afternoon, and to show our law enforcement we support and appreciate them!

< Back    + More

## YCPT Tangles: 'Antifa' and 'BLM'

Jim Arroyo, like most Oath Keepers and indeed those in his own unit, are extremely concerned about the specter haunting Chino Valley, Arizona: leftist shenanigans. 95.5% of all videos viewed by MilitiaWatch as part of this investigation mentioned 'Antifa' and 86.4% mentioned 'BLM'. Both of which are often mentioned together and interchangeably. In a discussion about "Neighborhood Watch" programs, these actors serve as a boogeyman for which the Oath Keepers are to respond with force of arms. Those patrolling the street on behalf of the YCPT are to send a warning via walkie-talkie to a central 'command', which then sends out a 'Quick Reaction Force' (or 'QRF') to dissuade their adversaries.

In a May 2021 community meeting, the YCPT leader detailed the actions of Black Hammer, specifically a cadre of the group that had bought land in Colorado. Jim Arroyo said that the group — which he and other meeting attendees ridiculed over being feckless and ineffective — was evidence that communists had also taken over the United States. Shortly thereafter, Jim added that the "U.S. military has been heavily penetrated by the Communist Party — witchcraft, all kinds of crazy religions". The 'threat environment' of the YCPT, like with the Oath Keepers they claim to have distanced themselves from and the militia movement they claim not to be a part of, is exceedingly broad, convoluted, and ever-growing. These types of discussions — melding discussions about adversaries with complaints about the current state of affairs in the US — are a staple of YCPT meetings.

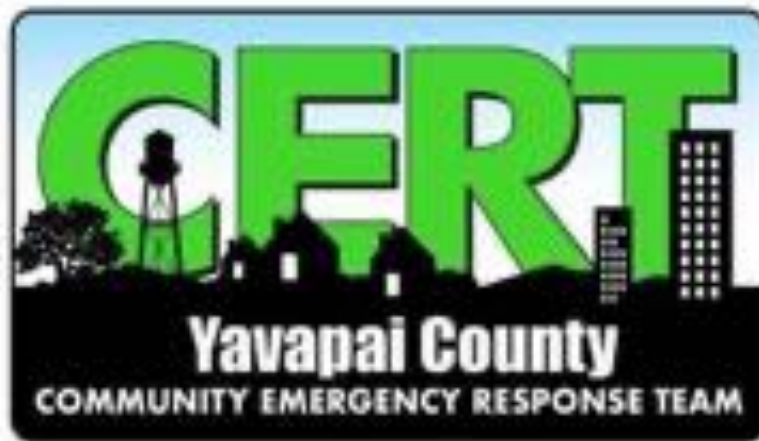
NPGs to respond to rumors about their adversaries.

## Funding

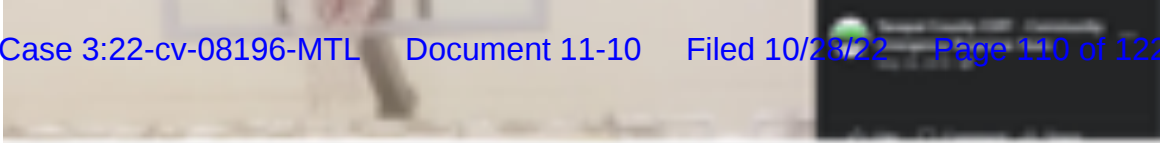
As mentioned above, the YCPT incorporated as a non-profit to seek donations for disaster relief. While they have reported some individual donations, it does not yet appear that they have been successful in earning a major grant, private or federal or otherwise. As early as March 2020, Jim was saying they had the 501c3 specifically to apply for funding and grants, a line he has repeated during many meetings.

One of the things that seems to indicate a posture towards a possible channel for funding is the YCPT's alignment with CERT programs, the "Community Emergency Response Team" federal program that seeks to teach preparedness to communities before disaster response is needed. They have CERT logos alongside "Stop the Bleed" logos on their physical and web banners.

There is a Yavapai County CERT organization that is active in Prescott Valley:



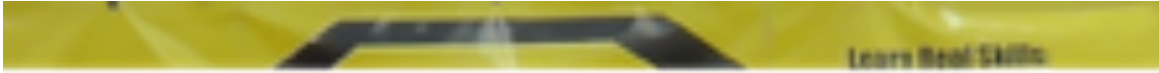
And the Yavapai County CERT group has hosted Jim and his big YCPT banner at least once in May 2019:



The Yavapai County CERT has also advertised a Three Percenters Original first aid training in the summer of 2019, too:



In addition to establishing the YCPT as a non-profit for donations and grant funding, Jim has used YCPT meeting time to advertise the group's coffee, known as "YCPT BREW", with its own corresponding line of YCPT-branded mugs. In transmissions, Jim refers to his coffee guy as "Jason", pointing him out to the crowd from his table at the front of the room.



#### Jim holding a bag of YCPT Brew at a YCPT meeting

While this isn't enough to determine who is supplying the group the coffee to sell, the YCPT posted on social media to advertise their coffee, which had a like from a Jason:







Jason Pangburn, as he is named on social media, has been a longtime member of the social media platform that the YCPT uses since 2014 (one of the earliest MilitiaWatch has seen):



Jason lists two companies on his profile: Divinitus Coffee and Beard Rescue. Divinitus Coffee just so happens to be listed on the bag posted by YCPT, too,





It wasn't hard to confirm Jason as the person in charge of Divinitus Coffee, which did, in fact, say it was incorporated in Dewey, Arizona at a location about half an hour away from the YCPT's meeting location at First Southern Baptist Church.



Addresses redacted as part of MilitiaWatch's 'no dox' policy, since these appear to be residential addresses.

Just out of curiosity, we then looked up the Beard Rescue company, which helpfully posted a semi-obsured trademark document on public social media:

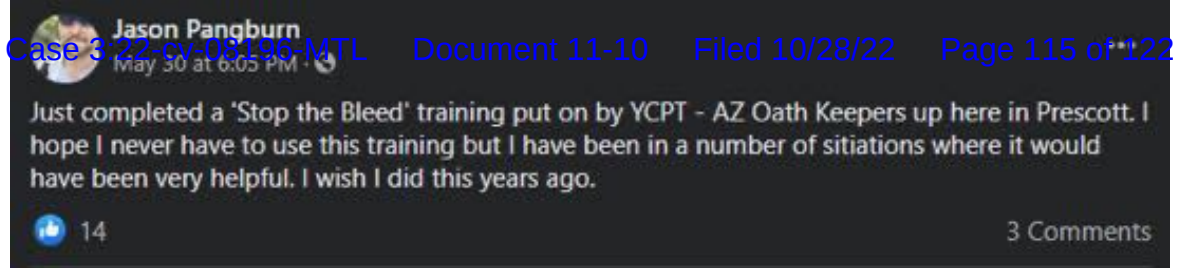
Facebook photo uploaded to the “Beard Rescue” Facebook, providing the name and number of the trademark, as well as an estimated time ([archive < https://web.archive.org/web/20210617223317if\\_/https://www.facebook.com/beardrescueusa/photos/382917108916985>](https://web.archive.org/web/20210617223317if_/https://www.facebook.com/beardrescueusa/photos/382917108916985) )

This was not hard to find on the Trademark Electronic Search System, and the owner/registrant was located at the same street address as the Divinitus Coffee LLC (obscured for privacy) in Dewey, Arizona:



Address obscured, highlight added to show town: Dewey, Arizona

To top it all off (and perhaps to make this tangent unimportant), a Facebook account belonging to someone with the same name and with photos that bear the same resemblance posted the following:



This 30 May 2021 post by Jason shows an admittance that he attended one of the YCPT's trainings in Prescott, a city nearer than Chino Valley to the locations Jason's companies are incorporated.

## Two developments

There are two important developments that speak to the direction of the YCPT. The first is a recalibration of their brand of Oath Keepers, nationally. The second is the group's new "political wing", launched in June after months of low-grade activity and planning.

## Going national

The YCPT came out of a national movement (the Oath Keepers), split from the national organization over being alienated from national, and have now moved to establish a new national organization using their chapter's name. This national organization was created for a few different reasons, a primary one likely is to funnel interest in the Oath Keepers from the 60 Minutes interview towards an organization. As of the time of writing, YCPT's national organization has claimed to have chapters in Arizona and Illinois. Arroyo has said that the national body, like the Arizona chapter that precedes it, is pushing to incorporate as a tax-exempt non-profit to seek federal funding.

While YCPT's incorporation is on the books with the Arizona Corporation Commission, the national organization has yet to clear onto the agency's site. There are delays related to incorporation that may explain this, but it points to the newness of the YCPT's nationwide expansion when compared to the 2-year-long operation window of the YCPT under legal filings with the state.

The YCPT's new national organization appears to be a realization of an aspirational organization that Arroyo and company have been discussing for a while. So far, the organization is only in its infancy, but has established a chapter in Illinois and there are claims of other chapters being organized in Florida and elsewhere. This new development shows the YCPT in AZ understands

to how important it is not to platform the group or their members because they have very much used several prominent media appearances to translate aspiration into organizational inertia. If they keep receiving this kind of major coverage (positive or otherwise), they will likely be able to continue to translate attention into organization.

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## **Getting political**

Established and led by “Lyle Rapacki” of Prescott Arizona, the “Yavapai Patriots” have made a recent feature at YCPT meetings. They filed to incorporate on 26 May 2021 as a domestic LLC for “Civic information and education” as their type. A trade name reservation was submitted in March 2021 ahead of the establishment of the LLC.

On 10 May 2021, Lyle Rapacki's news about establishing the “Yavapai Patriots” was published on the group's Facebook, with the subheader of none other than the constantly featured Prescott E-News:



Excerpt of a lengthy announcement post by Lyle J. Rapacki, Ph.D. in establishing the Yavapai Patriots on behalf of "WE THE PEOPLE"

Lyle Rapacki, because this network is so tightly wrapped, is of course also the host of a show on the Prescott E-News media environment. His program, "Arizona Today" has 20 uploads to its name, mostly about theories about how the election can be overturned:



Excerpt of Lyle's videos on the Prescott E-News site (archive)

Rapacki has run intelligence consulting firms for years. In 2009 he incorporated “Sentinel Intelligence Services, LLC”, and by a year later, had apparently written a leaked document labeled as an intelligence briefing on “Mexican Drug Gangs taking Over National Parks”. Within this document, Dr. Lyle argues that these cartels are growing “highly potent marijuana”:

**Overview:**

Mexico drug cartels stealthily and steadily are moving into the western National Parks of the United States. The absolute intention is to develop sophisticated areas for the growing of highly potent marijuana in farms that are heavily financed, and set-up as armed fortresses.

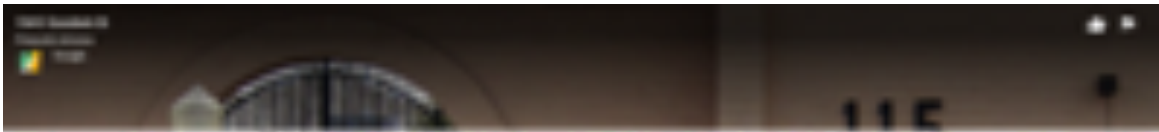
Marijuana has been cultivated on public lands in the United States for years, and even decades. What is different this time around is the level of sophistication employed by Mexican traffickers and drug cartels. Well-armed guards with AK-47s patrolling the perimeters of these farms, trip wires, kill-zones, land mines and crude IEDS just inside the cartel's designated perimeter, “spotters” with improved radio communications sitting atop high trees or rock formations, are now becoming common place, and a factor law enforcement must consider when interdicting.

The same report also argues that “Drug cartels hire marijuana experts” in their quest for more potent drugs to sell on the American market, which the cartels, Rapacki argues, intend “to take over... similarly to what they have with the methamphetamine business.”

Transparency USA, the group has earned contributions of \$5812 at the time of writing. The largest single donor is Lyle himself, who donated \$1553 to the PAC.

The YCPT is quite cozy with the Yavapai Patriots. Arroyo says he is a member of the Yavapai Patriots and attends their meetings, and allowed a representative to speak at his Oath Keepers meeting in June to fill the void of electoral action that the YCPT's legal standing does not allow.

Prescott E-News is also quite cozy with the Yavapai Patriots. Not only was the group announced on their site and led by one of their writers/content creators, but Dr. Rapacki lists his address as the same building as Prescott E-News. Here's Google's Streetview of the office building, with a Prescott E-News-emblazoned car in the handicap parking outside:



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### **So who do the Yavapai Patriots fund?**

The Yavapai Patriots have only one  
[expenditure <](https://www.transparencyusa.org/az/pac/yavapai-patriots-100543)  
[https://www.transparencyusa.org/az/](https://www.transparencyusa.org/az/pac/yavapai-patriots-100543)  
[pac/yavapai-patriots-100543-](https://www.transparencyusa.org/az/pac/yavapai-patriots-100543)



The screenshot shows a campaign finance report. At the top, there are two boxes: one with '\$5,812' and another with '\$767'. Below these, there is a table with columns for 'Candidate', 'Organization', 'Amount', and 'Type'. The first row shows a payment of \$5,812 to a candidate, with the name redacted. The second row shows a payment of \$767 to a candidate, with the name redacted.

Candidate	Organization	Amount	Type
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	\$5,812	Payment
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	\$767	Payment

This was \$350 made to the campaign of

Mark Finchem, a member of the Arizona House of Representatives. March

Finchem is the Arizona **lead** <

<https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/rep-mark-finchem-was-arizona-coordinator-for-pro-militia-group-11498687>> for the Coalition of

Western States, which supported the

Bundy occupation in Malheur Oregon, for which Finchem himself promoted three standoffs over email. Finchem **called** <

<https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/rep-mark-finchem-oathkeepers-charlottesville-deep-state-conspiracy-11249452>> Unite the

Right a “Deep State” operation staged by Democrats, an argument he made in a blog post on his campaign website in 2017 following the deadly riot. Finchem is

also a member of the Oath Keepers, according to an interview in 2014, during

which he **said** < [http://www.inmaricopa.com/mark-finchem-arizona-](http://www.inmaricopa.com/mark-finchem-arizona-house-candidate/)

[house-candidate/](http://www.inmaricopa.com/mark-finchem-arizona-house-candidate/)> “I’m an Oath Keeper committed to the exercise of limited,

constitutional governance.” Finchem, like most politicians listed previously in

this post, supported the “Stop the Steal” movement in Arizona, earning himself

the **disdain** < [https://www.abc15.com/news/state/seven-arizonan-](https://www.abc15.com/news/state/seven-arizonan-republican-legislators-face-calls-to-ban-them-from-the-house-and-senate)

[republican-legislators-face-calls-to-ban-them-from-the-house-and-](https://www.abc15.com/news/state/seven-arizonan-republican-legislators-face-calls-to-ban-them-from-the-house-and-senate)

[senate](https://www.abc15.com/news/state/seven-arizonan-republican-legislators-face-calls-to-ban-them-from-the-house-and-senate)> of many members of the Arizona Legislature.

## Network visualization

This article has named a ton of individuals, organizations, and the linkages between them. This can be difficult to grapple in just dry text and an occasional image, so here is a network visualization of all people and organizations mentioned here, sized by number of direct connections:





This is an exceptionally tight network (community detection determined essentially just 1 community of nodes). This is partially due to the way that network nodes were gathered — those who take photos and attend meetings or organize together are likely to do the same with others within the same network. One thing that is telling, though, is how close the GOP and the police are within this network.

The other story here is the potential flow of information from movements outside of the YCPT's immediate sphere and into a large, primed audience. The group is not in direct contact with but also is not far from actors such as Ammon Bundy or Nick Fuentes, for example.

## Conclusions

The YCPT appears to be vying for national relevance and legal recognition currently, with the understanding that this could translate to authority and finances tomorrow. Their history of focus on political adversaries, military-flavored response organizations, and endless discussions of US civil war is unavoidably informing this future. The YCPT's ability to bring dozens and hundreds of participants at their events speaks to their size and influence in a waning Oath Keepers field, something they seem to be actively trying to use to their advantage.